SERMONS OF *M. Iohn Caluin, vpon* the x. Commandements of the Lawe, giuen of God by *Moſes*, otherwiſe called the Decalogue.

Gathered worde for worde, preſently *at his Sermons, when hee preached on Deuteronomie*, without adding vnto, or diminiſhing from them any thing afterward.

Tranſlated out of French in*to Engliſh, by* I. H. armar

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T D

S.r William Baird of Newbaith Bar.t

To the Right excellent and Honorable Lord, the Lord Robert Dudley, Earle of Leicester, Baron of Denbigh, Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, Maister of the *Queenes Maiesties horses, and one of her Graces* most Honorable priuie Councell, Iohn Harmar wisheth all godly felicitie, continuance of health, increase of Honor, and graces eternall.

Occasioned, Right Honorable, to consider certaine of M. Caluins Sermons in the Frenche tongue, vpon the law of God and his hestes, and finding them (though gathered and set foorth by others, yet) answerable to their makers labour, to bee godly, learned, and profitable, I was the bolder to aduenture the deliuerance of them into our mother language, and most bolde to present your Honour therewith: the beginning of small ability, such as they bee, yet due to your Lordship, vnto whom I owe all thankefulnesse and humble duetie. Your Honours good procurement of her Maiesties gracious fauour, whereby I first became a Scholer in Winchester Colledge, afterward to bee removed to the Newe Colledge of Oxford, whereof at this present I am a poore member, I coulde neuer since forget, or bury so good a benefite in such great obliuion. Some significati-

nification therefore of a gratefull minde Is herein ſought, together with the profite of many the ſimpler ſort, which the rather may bee attained to, by your Lordſhips honourable name, fauourable countenance, and protection, which being vouchſafed, wil bee ſufficiently able to counteruaile the contrary endeuours of ſuch euill diſpoſed perſons as ſeeke euen vnder the colour of greateſt truth, to pull out the eyes of knowledge, and to bring a palpable darkeneſſe vppon the face of the earth, a darkeneſſe to be brought in by the groſſe myſt of deuout ignorance as more perillous, ſo more lamentable than the temporarie darkeneſſe of Aegypt. For that is the pretence which they vſe, when as they ſeeke no other thing than to entrap men by diueliſh Sophiſtrie. What need the lawe (ſay they?) We haue the Goſpel. What need we written expoſiters? We haue the liuelie voices of Preachers ſounding in great plentie euerie where. Of which two ſpeaches, the former is vaine, the later parciall, and both of them are wicked. Truth it is, that the ſtrength and ſting of the lawes dominion to condemnation, concerning the faithfull, is weakened and cleane plucked out: that the fire is extinguiſhed whetewith the mountaine ſmoked, that the ſtonie tables are ſoftned, that the heauie yoke is lightened, that grace hath ſuperabounded, and an horne of ſtrong ſaluation is erected and declared through the adminiſtration of the ſpirite. What then? Shall we therefore welter in ſinne, and wallow in the luſtes thereof, becauſe of theſe thinges? God forbid. Nay rather, as the law

ſchooleth vs, to ſeeke for grace at the bodie of Chriſte, ſo the gracious Chriſtian is taught to repaire againe to the booke of the lawe, to liue thereafter: in deede nowe, without ſeruile feare, being deliuered from bondage, to ſerue in freedome of an vpright, holie, and ſincere conſcience. But as the Bee that hath in her home, hath alſo a ſting: ſo the beſt men indued with the grace of GOD, a thing incomparable better than home, haue notwithſtanding certaine remnants of the ſtaine of Adam, as a ſting of corruption to their mortall bodies. Whereof to put vs in mind, that we may plucke out this ſting, and as it were weed the garden of our conſciences (who as the pureſt ground, yet bring foorth ſome weedes of imperfection:) the law of God is moſt behouefull & neceſſarie, and M. Caluins trauelles thereon, moſt fruitefull and profitable, who ſtriketh euer at the originall and roote of ſinne, and bringeth the commandement to his olde, firſt, and true meaning, from the corrupt and common vnderſtanding. For hee groundeth the expoſition of the law, vpon the nature of the Lawegiuer, who, becauſe he is a ſpirite, will be ſerued in ſpirite and trueth. And becauſe he ſearcheth the reines, & ſoundeth the depth of the heart; will be ſerued with euery affection and motion thereof, in all holineſſe and ſinceritie: ſo that no man can ſafely feede or flatter himſelfe in the ſmalleſt of his owne faultes or follies. And now, what need there is of this knowledge in England, all men ſee, and others can better ſay, than my ſelfe declare, how thinlie, ſcant heere and there, ſuch ex-

cellent vnderstanding groweth. Which thing, in more words to lament, were an ouerlong detei-ning of your Lordship from your greater affaires. The Lorde of Lordes, and God Almightie garde you euer, and guide you with his holie spirite, to the benefite and commoditie of our coun-trie, and to the profite of his Churche, with increase of honour, to his honor alwaies.

Your humble to command

Iohn Harmar.

The first Sermon of M. Iohn Caluin

of the Lawe.

Deut. 4.

44 This is the Lawe, which Moses layed before the children of Israel.

45 These are the witnesses, and the ordinances, and the Lawes, which Moses declared to the children of Israel, after they came out of Aegypte,

46 On this side Iordan, in the valley ouer against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon King of the Amorites, which dwelt at Hesbon.

Forasmuch as the worlde is hardly

of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bathan his neighbour, that he
yet punish them in number of the statutes and ordinances of God,
in the same the people should profit in them, and put them in practise,
and that if peradventure they had not been sufficiently instructed they
should be taught and diligently exercised in the same, and neither
should wholie abide. Thus ye see what Moses meant by this place:
and here by the way I admonish you to consider the cause why
Moses, the servant of God, admonished, & diligently did urge the
people fully to execute & declare (as he had received it of God) that God
had commanded by his word: and therefore that which is required
in the Law whatsoever was good and profitable. Now if it be
people would stay themselves, they should not serve to be such as

rant wretches doe which are straied from the right way, and are not instructed as wee are, vnto whome this doctrine ought to serue for mortification and newnesse of life: that God may beare rule ouer vs, and that we be subiect to him. Thus we see in effect what Moyses meant, when he protested vnto the people in this preface, that hee set before them the lawe, not that they shoulde heare it, and so but haue their eares beaten therwith: but that they should receiue it and kepe it. Nowe for the better confirmation of this, hee alledgeth: That God had made his couenant with that people on the mount Horeb, the better to perswade them to feare God, and to continewe in his obedience. For if God would only require of vs that which is his due, yet were wee sufficiently bounde to cleaue vnto him, and to obserue his commandementes: but when it pleaseth him of his infinite goodnesse to couenant with vs, to binde himselfe vnto vs, when hee needeth not: to stand on articles with vs, that he wilbe our father & sauiour, that he wil receiue vs for his flocke and heritage, that wee may liue vnder his gard and protection, offering vs euerlasting life: seeing that he doeth al these thinges, ought not our heart to bee softened though it were of stone? When the creatures beholde that the liuing God abaseth himself hitherto, as to treate the matter with vs, and to say: Goe to, let vs consider what wee are, both you see what an infinite distance is betweene you and me, and know that I could commande you what seemeth good to me, and not haue any thing to deale with you, and that you are not worthie to come nigh mee, or to haue any acquaintance with him, which can commande what he wil without any further declaration than this. See, this I will, and this is my minde: yet loe I yelde of my right. I come here to offer my selfe to be your guide and sauiour, I will [illegible] you, you shalbe my familie, if so be that you wil content your [illegible] with my worde. I will be your king, and you shal be my subiects: and for all this, thinke you not that the couenãt which I haue made with your fathers, was to gaine any thing of you: for I haue no neede or want of any thing whatsoeuer, and what benefite can you bestowe on me? But al which I haue done and doe, is onely for your profite, and for your welfare. I am then here readie to couenant by articles with you, and to binde my selfe vnto you on my part. Seeing I say, that the liuing God doth abase himselfe so farre, I pray you shal not we be to vnthankfull, if we be not herewith beaten downe to humble our selues [illegible]

laying aside all our pride and hautinesse: It is not therefore without cause, that Moyses speaketh heere of the couenant which God hath made with his people, to the ende that especially his fauour and goodnesse shoulde bee knowen. Nowe if this was to bee done in the time of the lawe, there is at this day much greater reason thereof: for the Lorde hath not only made a couenant for one time, as with the Iewes: but when hee sent his onely sonne, then declared hee himselfe to be our father and sauiour much more fully than before he had done, and that after so sweete, so gratious, and so amiable a manner, as nothing more: in such sort that he hath here as it were laide forth his bowelles of loue and compassion towardes vs. Seeing therefore God hath presented vnto vs his hearte in the person of our Lorde
Iohn. 15. Iesus Christ, and wee heare besides the protestation which Iesus
15. Christ maketh, that hee will call vs no more his seruaunts, but his friendes: because hee hath so familiarly communicated vnto vs al the secrets of his will: must it not I beseeche you needes bee, that the Diuel hath bewitched vs, if wee bee not hereby moued to frame our selues wholy vnto him, renouncing euen our selues, and all our affections? So then, when we perceiue in our selues any wickednesse, whereby wee are hindred to serue God, when we feele our selues idly disposed in the [illegible] of the Lord, & are euen brought into an heauie sleepe by the cares [illegible]ld, to stirre our selues vp to praise our God, let vs haue in [illegible] couenant which the Lorde hath made with vs. Nowe heere [illegible] further addeth: The Lorde made not this couenant with [illegible]s, but with vs, euen with vs which are aliue at this day. This place may bee vnderstoode after two sortes: for it may bee taken for a comparison which Moses maketh, the better to declare, [illegible] people which then liued, ought to bee so much the more diligent in the seruice of God, because they had receiued greater benefites than their fathers. In which sense hee speaketh
Exo. 6.3. in Exodus, I haue not communicated this name to your fathers: where God speaking vnto Moses saith, that he declared not himselfe so plainly to bee God to Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, as he [illegible] vnto Moses. And by this he signifieth, that the people should be now more attentiue, because God had reuealed himselfe vnto them after an vnaccustomed manner. Euen so in this place one may vnderstand this, God hath not made such a couenant with your fathers. It is true that God spake vnto his seruants Abraham, Isaac, & Iacob, and did

sufficiently

sufficiently instruct them. And it is expressly said in the. 18. of Gen. Shall I hide from my seruant Abraham, that which I will now execute vpon Sodome, and Gomorrha? For I know that hee wil instruct his houshold in my decrees and ordinaunces, in my statutes and iudgements. See then how Abraham instructed his family, not after some bare and naked manner, but in the iudgementes and statutes and ordinaunces of the Lord. Briefly, we must needes say that Abraham had the lawe of God imprinted in his heart: yet loe besides a benefite not to be contemned, when God hath sent his law in the two tables, to the end the instruction thereof might remains and abide for euer to his people, and that the thinges therein conteined, might be ratified for euer, and testified to al posterity as well as to them. We see then what we may gather vpon this sentence, euen as much as if Moses should haue said vnto his people. Beloued, acknowledge we the benefite the Lord bestoweth on vs this day, euē such an one as our fathers haue receiued none the like: for he deliuered not vnto them the law by writing, as vnto vs, he hath not declared to them these thinges in such plaine order. True it is, that he did sufficiently instruct them, & as much as was necessary and requisite for their saluation: but here is yet an higher degree and further stepp, to which we are come at this day, and therefore we ought to draw so much the nearer to him, seeing wee see that he hath so stooped vnto vs. And this is the meaning of Moses [illegible] vnderstand the place in this sense. As if a man should say [illegible] this day, that God hath not done so to our fathers, as he hath [illegible] vnto vs. And this is that which Christ said to his disciples, That many Kings and Prophets haue desired to see those thinges which you see, & heare those things preached with you heare, and yet haue not had their desire. Seeing then it is so, that God of his infinite mercie & gwodnelle vouchsafeth to preferre vs before the Patriarches and Prophetes, (as it is also said, that the Prophets serued not so much their owne time as ours) we ought with greater diligence to suffer our selues to bee taught [illegible], & to apply our selues wholy to his doctrine. Notwithstanding, when all is well considered, although this wee haue alleadged be profitable, and the exhortation is often brought in holy Scripture, yet when we shall haue weighed all the wordes, we shall finde that Moses when hee saieth that God did not make his couenaunt with them which heard the law the first day it was published, mea-

Gen. 18. 17. 19.

Mat. 13. 17. Luke. 10. 24.

1. Pet. 1. 12.

neth to say, that not onely with them hée made his couenaunt, but also with those which ouerliued them, and succéeded in the place of those which were dead. So that in fewe wordes Moses woulde here declare, that the lawe was not transitorie, to endure only for the life of them which firſt hearde it, but that it was a doctrine which shoulde reteine his ſtrength & authoritie for euer. The Lord our God (saith hee) hath not made a couenant with our fathers, that is to say, he would not only haue our fathers for his people, he was not tied to them, so that his lawe ſhould ſerue but for fortie or fiftie yéeres, but hée hath made a couenaunt with vs as well, and with them which were not borne when the law was publiſhed. You then which were not at the mount of Horeb, which haue not ſéene the fire on the mountaine, nor heard the thunderinges, know you notwithſtanding that your God did then adopt you also to him ſelfe, and that he made a couenaunt, in the which you also were comprised. You muſt therefore obſerue his lawe, becauſe it hath béene eſtabliſhed to bée perpetuall, to endure from age to age, and to bée preached euen to the ende of the worlde. And this is the true and naturall meaning of Moſes. And from hence we may gather a good and profitable doctrine: namely, that although we were not at firſt when the Goſpell was publiſhed, although we haue not ſéene with our eyes thoſe thinges which are mentioned in the law, yet ought we not therfore to haue in leſſe eſtimation & price the authoritie of the word of God. And why? I graunt that when God raiſed vp Moſes, it was an eſpeciall token of his fauour and goodneſſe towardes the people, which then liued: yet notwithſtanding, the authoritie of the Lawe muſt not at any time be diminiſhed: for it cõteineth the truth of God which allwayes abideth, and is not variable and tranſitorie, as men are. It is ſaid, that men are as a flowre, or as an herbe, which by and by drieth and withereth, but the truth of the Lord endureth for euer. Now this truth which is vnchaungeable, is conteined in the Lawe. Truely the Lawe as touching the ceremonies is vtterly abolished: but as touching the ſubſtance & doctrine which it conteineth, it reteineth allwayes his force & power ſtill: not one iot thereof falleth away or periſheth. So then let vs note, that though we haue not liued in the time of Moſes, this ſerueth not to alledge, that we may therfore contemne the admonitions he hath giuen & are conteined in the lawe. And why? For he hath ſpoken to vs, he hath not only ſpoke to the multitude which was aſſem-

Iſay. 40. 6 7. 1. Pet. 1. 24.

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bled at mount Horeb, but generally to the whole worlde. And if this be saide of the lawe, by a greater & more strong reason is it to be saide of the Gospel. For as we haue said, the law concerning the shadowes thereof, is cleane done away, but the Gospel hath no suche thing. For in it our Lord maketh a newe & euerlasting testament, & a couenant to last from generation to generation. Howe then must wee be affected, whē the Gospel is preached? We must remember that the sonne of God came into the world, not onely to instruct them, with whom hee was conuersant in his manhoode: but that hee hath wonne vs to God his father, and hath called vs to saluation, by sending his Apostles, that their voice should sound to the endes of the worlde, to them which heard not him, to make them partakers of the doctrine of saluation: the which at this day also wee ought to receiue, as if Iesus Christ were yet in the middest of vs, or as if the Apostles with their owne mouthes did speake vnto vs. And this is that which wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place, that we make no alteration in the Churche of GOD, neither attempt to chaunge any thing in his worde, knowing that hee will alwayes haue kepte therein one equall traine. For seeing that he hath deliuered vnto vs his Gospel, and stablished a certeine rule of regiment in the time of the Apostles, and in the primitiue Church, we must hold the same, and theron rest our selues. If wee doe otherwise, it is as if wee woulde make the word of God mortall and corruptible with vs. So then let vs learne, that though the worlde be variable and inconstant, and hath euerie day his backturning: and though there bee none of vs, whiche hath not alwayes many gadding opinions, whiche trotte in our braine, that yet not withstanding, concerning that the worde of God hath appointed, we are not to take that libertie, to doe at one time this, and at another time that, as we list, and as we fansie. Wherefore? Because God hath not made this couenaunt with our fathers, but with vs which are aliue at this day. As long then as we are in the worlde, let vs knowe, that Gods gouerning of vs, and his shewing vs the way, is to the end we should not be as wandering pilgrimes to stray hither and thither, and to raunge as our lusts and appetites turne vs: but that we should be conducted as by his hand. To be short, whereas Moses saith, Heare we that are all aliue at this day, it is to declare & proue, that men during their life time, ought not to forge any newe Lawe, that they ought not to haue to day one, to morrowe an other.

And why? For the life of man is in the laue of God, which ought to suffice vs. Let vs then make our profite by regarding the things that tend thereunto. And further, it is no doubt, but Moses here chargeth the people with vnthankfulnesse which should be in them, if they dedicate not their liues to the seruice of God: as if he should say, How liue wee? Is it not for that the Lorde hath placed vs in this worlde? If then our life we haue, be giuen of him: ought we not to bestowe it & employ it in his seruice? Ought it not to be wholie consecrated to his will? We see then howe Moses reprooueth here al them which wander, and continue not their course in the worde of God. Let vs withall reteine in memorie that which I haue aboue touched: that is, that we haue not a doctrine for thre dayes, but one wherein wee must be confirmed as long as we liue. Therfore when we haue once receiued and embraced that which is conteined in the holie scripture, let vs studie to profite our selues by it, and to go forward, encreasing in the knowledge & practise of it, till God shal draw vs out of this worlde, knowing that he will vouchsafe to take vs into his couenaunt, and that hee for his parte will not be vnfaithfull and vnconstant, but sure and stedfast in his purpose and promise. Let vs doe the like, that wee may be ioyned to him: and as long as wee liue let vs haue no other purpose, but to cleaue vnto him, howbeit as he hath declared in his worde. But let vs not thinke to ioyne and vnite our selues to our God by our owne fantasies: but since he commeth vnto vs, let vs go vnto him, and when we are come thither, let vs take good heede to stay our selues there. And thus we se what we haue to gather vpon this place, to the ende we may the better be stirred and prepared to receiue the instructions, which shall hereafter be geuen vs, concerning the lawe of God and his Commaundements.

Now we let vs fall our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledging of our sins, desiring him to make vs liue them better than wee haue done, in such sort that we neuer [illegible] but to yelde our selues wholie vnto him: and that it will please him to reach vs his hand, and not suffer vs to be ouercome by our owne fantasies, and affections, that wee may altogether magnifie his goodnesse, which he vseth towardes vs, that he may profite by it, and bring vnto him that obedience and vnitie which he desireth, especially, for that it hath pleased him to bring and deliuer vnto vs his [illegible] and that he is not onely contented to shew vs the way of [illegible]

but

but hath vouchsafed also to adopt vs for his children, and to declare himselfe our father and saviour, for our Lorde Jesus Christes sake. That he will not only graunt this grace to vs, but to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

Deut. Chap. 5.

1 Then Moses called all Israel and saide vnto them, Heare, O Israel, the ordinaunces and the lawes which I set before you this day, that yee may learne them, and take heede to observe them.

2 The Lord our God made a covenant with vs in Horeb.

3 The Lorde made not this covenant with our fathers, but with vs, which are all alive at this day.

4 The Lorde talked with you face to face on the mount out of the middest of the fire.

WE have seene heeretofore howe greatly Moyses hath laboured to make the people perceive the maiestie which is in the worde of God, to the ende they shoulde receive it with al reverence and feare. For although men protest that they will obey God, (for so nature constrayneth them,) yet can they not order themselves and their doinges according to his worde: and that is the very true touchstone to knowe whether wee be obedient to God or no. But herein is the rebellion of the worlde seene, that although all will confesse that the worde of God is to be receiued without any gainsaying, yet shal one finde scarse one among an hundred, which willingly humbleth himselfe to yelde vnto it that authoritie it deserveth. And why is this? Surely, because we consider not of the maiestie of God, which declareth it selfe therein. See then howe Moyses not without cause, so often heeretofore hath warned the people, that the worde of God shoulde be of such maiestie towardes vs, that all creatures shoulde tremble at it. And nowe againe hee adioyneth a

sonday

confirmation of the same matter when he saith, That the lord talked face to face on the mount, out of the middest of the fire: as if hee shoulde say: You haue no cause nowe to doubte whether the doctrine which I propose vnto you, be of God or of men: for it is sufficiently proued. God hath declared himselfe vnto you by plaine and visible signes, in such sorte, that you may well perceiue, it is hee which speaketh. Nowe then wee see the intent and meaning of Moyses. But before wee passe any further, one may heere make a question, Howe is it said that God spake face to face, seing that men cannot comprehende his infinite glorie? For with what eye can wee contemplate his substance & being? We are so fraile & weak, that if God should but shew one beame of his brightnesse, behold, we should be al dazeled & confounded therwith. On the other side we know how it is said, That we cannot see god face to face, vntil we be renewed, which shal not bee vntil the latter day. For now (saith S. Paule) Wee see 1. Cor. 13 12. as in a glasse, & in part, euen obscurely and imperfectly. Which more is, he saith in another place, That the gospel at this day doth present 2. Cor. 13. 14. & 18. vnto vs the maiestie of God, in such sorte, that wee may see it, but the lawe was darke and obscure, and had a vaile which hindered our fathers to knowe God, in so plaine and familiar a maner as wee doe at this day. But all this agreeth very well. For when wee make a comparison of the lawe with the Gospell, it is certaine we shall finde this which Saint Paule speaketh to bee most true. For then God declares not himself in so familiar a fashion as he doth vnto vs, Heb. 1. 3. by the meanes of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the liuely ymage of him. Nowe a dayes therefore, there are layde open vnto vs the great treasures of wisdome, in that God calleth vs to the kingdome of heauen, & sheweth that he holdeth vs for his children & heires. Now this was not in the time of the lawe. And yet, although at this day we haue such a knowledge and so plaine and manifest, yet remaineth that alwayes true which we haue alledged, that wee see but in parte. And why? For we are not yet partakers of the glorie of God neither can wee come neere it, but it behoueth that he be like vnto vs according to our rudenesse and infirmitie. Yet notwithstanding, from the beginning of the world God hath appeared vnto mortall men. Howbeit, this was not to shew himselfe as hee is, but as the weakenes and infirmitie of men might beare it. Wee must then note, that God was not knowen to the fathers, neither appeareth at this day in his owne

beeing:

being: but hee applieth himselfe to vs, in asmuch as he sheweth himselfe for our measure and abilitie, to make vs perceive that hee is present. And yet for al that, it is not without cause, that Moses saith here, that God spake face to face: for he vnderstandeth hereby, that the people had not some coniectural signe, that they might doute of him, or conceive onely some final opinion of God, but that they had a certaine and infallible warrant: whereby they might in this sorte conclude: Behold, God hath so shewed himselfe to vs, that our faith need not wauer and be doubtful: and the doctrine which is proposed vnto vs in his name, ought no longer to be disputed of, whether it be to be receiued or refused. And why? For God hath delivered vnto vs a sure and certaine marke, which cannot begnile, nor leaue vs in dout, but that this doctrine proceedeth from him. Now we vnderstand the meaning of Moses, from whence wee haue to gather a good lesson, that is, that if God declare not himself vnto vs after so high & glorious a manner as our lust desireth, let vs know that hee doeth it for our profite and saluation. For let vs haue an eye to our infirmitie, & it will be sufficient to abate that ouerboldnesse, to the which our nature alwayes turneth vs. For wee would inquire and seeke after the secrets of God, without end or measure: And why is that? Verily, because we consider not our owne power and abilitie. Wherefore let vs praise the great goodnes of our God, for that hee in fauour so considereth of vs, & regardeth our weakenesse, that he is content to hide his glorie, least we should be swallowed vp therof. For as I haue already said, we cannot beare it, being so fraile & weake as we are. And herewithal let vs know, that when God giueth vs some euident signe and token of his presence, there resteth then no excuse, if we yeld not to him the honour, and do him the homage hee is worthy of. Let vs not then desire that GOD come in his inestimable glorie, that the Heauens cleaue in sunder, that all the Angels of Heauen appeare: but when the Lorde any way declareth, that it is he which speaketh, let it suffice vs, and let vs humble our selues incontinently. For if then we wil forestowe to yeld him our dutie, we shalbe sharply reprooued for turning our backe to him, when hee sheweth his face to vs. It is true that it is said in another place, That men cannot see the face of God, & liue. And although Moses had a wonderfull reuelation of the glorie of God, as he speaketh in Exodus 33. That the Lord spake face to face vnto him, as a man speaketh vnto his friend: Exo. 33. 20. Iud. 13. 22. Exo. 33. 11.

yet is it saide, That hee sawe but the backe of God onely: but this is to the end allwaies to shewe vs, that while we be enuironed in this flesh, wee ought not to approche vnto the maiestie of GOD, or thinke to mount so high. For if the very Angels of heauen, vnder Esay.6.2. the figure of Cherubims, hyde their eyes, when there is any mention of the appearance of God, what must we do which doe but traile here and creepe on the ground? But howsoeuer it bee, God will condemne vs of vnthankfulnesse, when we will not beholde his face, & bee sufficiently contented with those visible signes, which he sheweth vs of his presence. Aboue al, let vs be mindeful of this, when any question is of submitting our selues both to the law and the gospel. For it is there especially, that God will bee knowen of men, to the intent they shoulde worshippe him, receyuing simply whatsoeuer commeth out of his mouth. To what purpose then shall wee apply this sentence of Moyses? Forsooth to this, that when the Scripture is set before vs, when one preacheth and expoundeth it vnto vs, or that wee our selues reade it, this speeche of his muste serue to humble vs, to the ende that God may bee with al reuerence exalted, and that wee presume not to make any replie to his worde: but that we tremble at it, as he speakes therof to the Prophet Esay. For all that Esay.66.2 which is contained in the holy Scripture, is in such sort prooued, that one may say, that God hath spoken to men euen after a visible manner. Now Moses after this addeth, That he stoode betweene the Lord and them, as a mediatour betweene God and men, because the people feared, and durst not ascende vp into the mount. Whereby Moyses signifieth, that though the lawe were brought by a mortall man, yet ought it not to be derogation to the authoritie thereof. And why? Because this was for the instruction of the people: so that the faulte rested in them. And this place is wel worth the noting. For wee allwaies lacke some starting holes, to the ende wee might set light by the worde of God. Truely, wee doe not pretend it openly, but in couert, but yet all the worlde is set vppon this wicked deceite, so that a man shal finde, men thinke themselues well, and at very good ease, when they can finde any colour to say: O, I knowe not whether this be the word of God, or no: I know not whether it be spoken to me. I know not what condition it hath. Thus ye see how the worlde seeketh allwaies to exempt it selfe from the obedience to Gods worde. And this trouble is ouer common, to say: Yea, it is true, that God ought to be

obeyed,

obeyed, but they be but men, which preache it to vs, as we be: must we then receiue their doctrine, as if Angels appeared to vs from heauen? Many thinke it sufficeth to say thus, when notwithstanding they shew themselues herein rebellious to God, or rather they haue no care to submit themselues to him & his worde. But we haue here one answer to cut off al such vain allegations, that is, when God sendeth his worde by the hand & ministerie of men, he doth it, because of our fault & infirmitie. Notwithstanding, he ceaseth not to shewe vs some marke of his glorie, in such sort, that his worde may be knowne to be heauenly: & so that being duely considered, it is euident, that God hath warranted enough, & more than enough. Neither hath Moses spoke this onely for the instruction of the auncient fathers, but this admonition serueth also for vs: that if men, as we are, be appointed messengers to preach vnto vs the worde of God, it ought not in our estimation derogate any thing from the maiestie thereof. And in very deede we consider litle of our owne frailtie & weaknesse, when we desire that God should teach vs by miracles euerie day, & we know not what is meet & conuenient for vs. For as for miracles, there haue bene euen alreadie shewed, to confirme the truth, both of the Lawe, & of the Gospel, that wee might haue a full & certeine assurance of them. But, it is most behoofull, that God dealeth so mercifullie with vs, that he seruedeth men like to our selues, & committeth vnto them the charge and office of teaching vs in his name, and in his roome, as one that allureth vs vnto him selfe, with all kindenesse & gentlenesse. For can we thinke our selues able to sustaine and abide his presence, if he should appeare to vs as he is? Alas, we should be all vtterly consumed, if God should speake in his maiestie and power. We know it is said, That the voice of the Lord is enough to shake mightie rockes, & moue huge mountaines out of their places: & can we which are so fleshly & weake, as nothing more, stand before so puissant a power? we must be daunted, & cast down, as with the force of some behemoth thundring, to the bottomlesse pit of hell? Let vs note then, that when God hath ordeined, that his worde should be preached to vs by men, & committed to writting, therein he applieth him selfe to our weakenes, and dealeth with vs, as if he were a mortal man, to the end we should not feare to come vnto him, being drawne by so great lenitie and gentlenesse. And withall let vs consider, what honour he doth vs, when he vouchsafeth to chuse out from among vs poore and vile wret-

Psal. 29.

wretches, to represent his person, and to speake vnto vs in his name. For what greater thing could he appeare vnto the Angels of heauen? What more honourable charge & office could he commit vnto them? Therefore when he vaineth & vouchsafeth men of so great and excellent honour, as to carrie abroad his word as his Embassadours, doth he not declare vnto vs in this one thing his more than fatherlie goodnesse toward vs? Now on the other side he maketh trial of our humanitie. For if he should thunder from heauen, if he should appeare in visible maner, if the Angels should descend vnto vs, we neede not greatly meruell, if men did giue credit to his word: but when all both great & small receiue the order which God hath set in his Church, as they yeelde obedience to his word when it is preached, therein is our faith tried. But in the meane while let vs alwayes remember this, that God hath sufficiently declared him selfe to men, so that we haue no occasion at all to doubt of his word, & to dispute whence it commeth. For his will is made more than certein, if so be we be not vnthankfull in receiuing the signes which he hath giuen vs. Thus ye see then, what we haue to note in this place, when Moses saieth, The people durst not approche nigh to the hill, for the great feare they had conceiued. And although at this day we refuse not, but that God should speake vnto vs: yet when all is well considered, it should not be profitable for vs. And therfore let vs know, that this ought not to lessen the certeintie and assurance of our faith, when God thus vseth the meanes & ministerie of men. It is said consequently, That God hath taught his people, saying: I am the eternall & euerliuing thy God, which haue brought thee out of the land of Egypt, thou shalt haue no other GOD before my face. In this place, GOD, to holde his people as with a bridle in obedience, telleth them, that the knowledge they haue, ought to keepe them farre from all superstitions. For it is no straunge thing to se the heathen haue their idolles, and to runne all raye after their errours and fantasies, if we remember what man is in him selfe. We are also so giuen to vanitie, that it is lamentable to beholde, neither neede we to goe to schole to learne to be deceiued: for euerie man heerein is a great Doctour in that case: briefly, we all runne to euill, though vnder the cloke and colour of that which is good: so that for the true seruice of GOD, there is nothing in vs, but superstition and idolatrie: and so the Gentiles haue had their diuers kindes of superstition: for euerie one

and hath forged fables what at his pleasure: and all this while the liuing GOD hath beene left and forsaken of all. And why? because GOD vouchsafed not to be so gracious to all the world, to declare himselfe vnto them. Wee see then howe men were become as beastes in their opinions, and that was for default of teaching: although for all this they are not holde excused, for they are alwayes guiltie before GOD, forasmuch as the fountaine of idolatrie proceedeth from their owne malice, and vnthankfulnesse, when as euen by their owne motion hath forsaken the euerliuing GOD. But when the worlde was growne out of kinde, the poore Gentiles wandered like blinde men in darkenesse, for they wanted the light to shewe them the way of saluation. Notwithstanding the Lorde accuseth the Israelites of rebellion, if they obserue not the Lawe which he hath giuen. Why so? I am the euerliuing thy GOD. When he saieth, The euerliuing: it is to exclude other Gods, which are vnioyned of men. As if hee should say, There is but one Godhead, and that is found in me: it must needes then be concluded, that they, which hauing knowne mee, turne themselues after their owne fantasies, are not able to alledge that they haue not willingly and wittingly renounced the liuing GOD. Now, when hee addeth, That he is the GOD of his people: this is to shewe that he hath sufficiently declared himselfe to be knowne vnto them, as if he did say, I haue separated you from among the rest of men: you see howe others wander, and that because they lacke wherewith to guide, and direct them: but I haue chosen you for my people, and I haue giuen my selfe to you. Seeing then I am your GOD, holde your selues to me, other wise you shall haue much lesse excuse then the Paynims. My vengeance must needes be double vpon you: yea, an hundred times more grieuous than vppon other, because you haue falsified the promise, and broken the couenaunt which I made with you. He alledgeth yet further the fauour he did vnto his people, when he saieth, That he brought them out of the lande of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: whereby he signifieth, that he hath so bounde the people vnto him, that they cannot reuolte, but that they shall deserue to bee more grieuously punished. For when they shall haue forgotten the redemption, by the which they were deliuered out of bondage, shoulde not their vnthankfulnesse bee double, when being deliuered by so mightie an

hande, they yelde not them selues subdite to the seruice of their Maister? And at purpose maye be call Egypt, The house of bondage, to the ende the people shoulde well consider, in what estate they had bin there. For wheras he we they, which had sighed and cried when they were oppressed with suche great violence, and tyrannie, (as we read of in Exodus) assone as God had deliuered them, desired to returne thither againe. And whence proceedeth this, but that they remembred not their long and sore oppression, but while they endured it: and that the Deuil had shutte up their eyes, that they shoulde not esteeme the fauour of God, according to the price and worthinesse thereof? That is the cause, why Moses in this place nameth Egypt, The house of bondage, for the ende there is set before the commaundement, that the people shoulde haue no other God before the face of him, whome they ought to holde for their God. Nowe let us applie this whole doctrine to our vses.

Exod. 1.

First therefore, whe it is said, I am the eternal or euerliuing, let vs learne to weigh the iuste meaning of this worde, whe as the maiestie of God appeareth vnto vs, lest imagine to our selues. For God can not suffer any companion. If the brightnesse of the Sunne darken the light of the Starres, is it not great reason that whe God sheweth him selfe, euerie one shoulde worship him, and that all glorie, which shall haue bene before, bee as it were brought to nothing? And this is the cause why it is said to the Prophets, That when the Lorde shall reigne, there shall then appeare no other brightnesse but his: that the Sunne it selfe shal be dimmed, and that the Moone shal be turned into darknesse. This is to shewe, that if we mingle with God the fantasies of our owne braine, we take away so muche from the right which appertaineth to him: for he can not suffer any companion.

Esai. 60. 9.

It behoueth then, that this worde, Euerliuing, bridle all our fantasies and fond imaginations, in suche sorte, that we presume not on the libertie to conceiue this and that, but that we content our selues with this simplicitie, to haue one God, and that this suffice vs. And for this cause, it is also saide: That when our Lorde Iesus shall prepare and establishe his seate in the worlde, that all the idols of Egypt shall fall to the grounde. Nowe this place appertaineth vnto vs. For as Moses saide to the people of auncient time,

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you haue the euerliuing, and therefore it behoueth that all yooles be chaced from among you: euen so now, whereas God is declared and made manifest vnto vs in the person of his only sonne, all our yooles must fal downe.

Moreouer, we know, that Egypt, aboue al countries of the world besides, was ful fraughted with yooles. Therefore, though we haue bene in former times euen plunged in lyes, and errours, and darknesse, though we haue had an infinite number of yooles, yet as long as God declareth that he is the euerliuing, al must vanish and fal away as water. Now, when further he nameth himselfe, Our God, this is to entise vs after so gentle a manner, that his maiestie might be knowen vnto vs in most louing and amiable wise. For if GOD should speake only of his eternitie and soueraigne being, we should be al confounded. Of a trueth, this might suffice to condemne all our votages: yet we in the meane time cannot be fully hereby inflamed to our vse and profite. It behoueth then, that after it hath bene declared, that it is he alone whome we ought to reuerence, and to whome we must doe homage: that he come vnto vs all, after a gentle and familiar maner, that we may perceiue him to be our father and sauiour, and that we may knowe that he wil alie him selfe, and make a couenant with vs, to the ende we should cleaue vnto him. This is meant by the title which he giueth himselfe in this place, saying, I am not onely thy euerliuing, which coms heere to fright thee: but I am withal thy GOD. I haue chosen thee to my selfe: I will that thou bee my heritage. So then wee now se, howe GOD authorizeth his Lawe, to the ende we should receiue it in all feare and humilitie, and howe withal he sweeteneth it with his loue, to the ende we should take a taste of it, and with a delight and pleasure, submit our selues vnto it, not refusing to be gouerned by the doctrine therin contained. And let vs knowe, that we can haue no excuse, if at this day we honour not our GOD in truth, renouncing all our superstitions, and whatsoeuer is contrarie to his seruice. And why? Because he chaunged his name vnto vs to himselfe by these tytles, which are giuen to holde vs in his feare. When hee speaketh of the rule and power he hath ouer vs all: and when hee calleth him selfe, Our God, this ought to make vs taste his fatherly goodnesse. Thefe thre things are here comprised. Wee se then that there

[illegible] requireth

remaineth nothing, but that we giue diligent eare to that which is declared vnto vs in the lawe of God, and thereon wholie rest and stay our selues. And so this ought to haue bene the people of Israel, that they neither feared nor loued him. If I be thy God and maister, where is then my feare? If I be thy father, where is my loue? saith he by his Prophete Malachie. Here is no doubt, but the Prophete in this place had respect vnto this which Moses heere briefly toucheth. For when God nameth him selfe the everlasting, he doeth it to the ende, that we shoulde beare him due reuerence. When he nameth himselfe the God of his people, it is to winne them by loue and gentlenesse, and to shewe, that after he hath elected them, they shoulde giue themselues ouer wholie into his hande. Now if this were vnder the lawe, by greater right it agreeth vnto vs. For although God in the person of his onely sonne wouldе as it were be made abaſed, yet for all this remaineth he alwayes in his glorie, neither is any thing diminished from the highnesse of that maiestie, whereof he here maketh mention. The abasement of our Lord Iesus Christ, is an infallible testimonie of the mercie and loue of our God, yet howsoeuer it be, this ought not to serue vs to contemne, or to lesse esteeme his maiestie: for God in this sort hath stooped to vs, that he might allure vs to behold with lesse feare his maiestie, and learne to reuerence him in such sorte as we ought to doe. So then of good right shal he reproue vs at this day, as being altogether inexcusable, if we doe not feare and loue him. For he sheweth himselfe our God & and our maister. But where is our feare, when we regard not that he commaundeth vs, when we haue hardened our heartes against his threateninges, as if we woulde despitefully resist him, when we continewe in our wickednesse? And although he hath said, He will be our iudge, & that he wil one day take an account of our doings: haly is it that we make but a sporte & mockerie of it? Where is (I say) the feare which we owe to our God? For it seemeth, that we will feare a mortal creature more than the liuing God, which hath al preeminence, and superiorite, and maistership ouer vs.

Moreouer, it is not enough that we feare God, after some seruile maner, as being forced therevnto: but we must haue a ioye alwayes ioyned with our feare. For therefore nameth he him selfe our Father. And let vs also note, that when he declareth him-

selfe,

selfe the God of Israel, he meaneth hereby this word, that he is our Saviour also. Thou art our God (saith the Prophet Habuk) and we cannot perish. So then let us keepe in minde these titles, so farre forth as they appertayne to us, and ought to serue this day for our instruction: knowing that the maiestie of God hath appeared in our Lord Iesus Christ. Now let us marke this which he further addeth for the greater proofe of his loue and fauour: I have brought you (saith hee) out of the land of Egypt. It is true, that God heere specially bindeth vnto himselfe the people of Israel above all other nations, too which ende hee expressly setteth downe the redemption hee had wrought them: But when God speaketh, wee must consider of all the benefites for the which wee are indebted to him, which although they are in number infinite and inestimable: yet wee ought at least wise call them to minde, so farre as our small ability may bee, applying all our wits and senses thereto: perceiuing that wee bee dull and are behind in this point, let us straine our selues better to minde them, at least so farre, as to be thereby instructed in the loue and feare of our God. Doth then God speake? We must first consider, that this is hee which created us, wee are therefore his. Why one benefite were sufficient to prouoke euery one with all his might to serue and honor God. For what sufficient recompence can we make him, if there were but this, that hee hath placed vs in this worlde, and of his mercie nourisheth vs heere? But yet when wee shall haue cast our eyes vp on high, or downe below, if we take a diligent view of all the tokens hee sheweth vs of his loue, seeing that hee hath created the worlde for our sake, that he hath appointed all things to our vse, considering that hee hath engraued his diuine image in vs, that wee should bee immortall, vnderstanding that he hath prepared a better heritage for vs then this brittle and transitory life: when we perceiue all these thinges, must it not needes be that wee are more blockish and brutish than beasts, if wee bee not ouercome with a feruent desire to worship our GOD, to vowe, and to dedicate our selues wholly vnto him? But yet further than this, we must make enquiry, and enter into accompt, as well of the benefites which are bestowed on vs all in general, as whereof euery one also particularly is endued, and then behoueth it euery one to make his confession with Dauid: Lord, when I thinke on thy benefites, too my spirite is plunged as it were in some great deapth, they surmount in number

the hayres of my head, as hee speaketh in the 40. Psalme. Agayne, when wee shall haue knowne howe farre wee are al bound to God in generall, let euery one in the priuie chamber of his owne heart consider the benefites which he hath receiued of the handes of God. And in steede of that which was said in olde time to the people of Israel, I haue redeemed you out of the lande of Egypt, let vs remember from whence our Lord hath deliuered vs; whē it pleased him to receiue vs into his family & vnto his church. For wee are the children of Adam, by nature cursed, and inheritors of death, we haue nothing in vs but sinne, & so consequently we muste needs be accursed before God. Let men please & magnifie themselues as they list, yet behold their birth, behold their nobilitie: they are but bondslaues of Sathan, they haue a filthie & bottomlesse gulfe of corruption in them; they are worthy that the wrath & malediction of God fall on their heads: briefly being banished from the kingdome of heauen, they are geuen ouer to all misery & wretchednesse. Now our Lord and God, by the hand of his sonne, hath hence deliuered vs. He hath not sent a Moses, as to the people of auncient time: but not sparing his onely sonne, hee hath deliuered him to death for vs. Seeing then redemmed with so deere and inestimable a price, as is the holy and sacred blood of the Sonne of God, ought wee not wholy too yeeld our selues vnto him? And withal let vs note, that if it be said, That Egypt was a house of bondage, what shall shame and confusion is this, when Sathan holdeth vs in his bandes, and vnder his tyranny, by such sort that we haue no meane to escape death; that we be excluded from all hope of saluation, that God is our enemie and aduersarie? Now being deliuered from all this, is not our redemption farre more greater and excellent than this, whereof Moses here speaketh? So in steede that it was sayde to the auncient people, Thy God hath deliuered thee out of the lande of Egypt, it is now saide, That wee be redeemed from the bondage of Sathan to liue vnto the Lord, as Saint Paule speaketh in the 14. Chapter of his Epistle to the Romanes, and the first of the first to the Corinthians; that wee are not our owne. It behoueth therefore the faithfull, that they presume not on the libertie, too doo what semeth them, and to liue euery one after his owne lust. And why so? The Lorde Iesus therefore died and rose againe & reuiued, that he might be Lord both of the quick & dead. It is then good reason, that Iesus Christ shoulde be Lord both of the liuing

Rom. 14. 9.

1. Cor. 6. 19.

Rom. 14. 9.

ning of the dead, seeing he hath not spared himselfe for our redemption & saluation. And besides this, that the sonne of God hath offered himselfe vpon the crosse to redeeme vs, let vs knowe that euen this day by the meanes of the Gospell he maketh vs partakers of this benefite: for hee hath gathered vs to him selfe, to the end we should be of his flocke and inheritance. It is true that he is that vndefiled lamb and without spot, which taketh away the sinnes of the world, and that he hath offered him selfe to reconcile man vnto God. Howbeit, seeing it is, that we see many people forsaken, to whom the gate is shut, and to whome God hath not shewed this fauour, to inlighten them in the faith, as we are. And withall let vs note, that forasmuch as the Gospell is preached vnto vs, we haue herein a sure testimonie, that the sonne of God will make the redemption which hee hath once accomplished, available vnto vs, and that he will haue vs to reioyce in such a benefite. Let vs learne then that our vnthankfulnesse shalbe so much the more vilainous, if wee employ not all our paines to serue that God, which hath by such benefites bounde vs vnto himselfe. If such as are not of ỹ houshold of faith behaue themselues as vntamed horses broken lose, if they passe all measure in their superstitions, if they be lose and lawlesse in their liuing, this may well be, because they haue no bridle to restraine them, because the Lord reineth them not backe as he doeth his houshoulde seruantes. Wee see the horrible confusion which is now in the Papasie. But all this while they haue no doctrine to reduce men vnto God, but rather to estraunge them from him. And wee see howe the deuill hath gained an empire and kingdome among them in such sort, that all is ful of deceites & illusions, and that the liuing God is forsaken. See therefore an horrible confusion. But as for vs, seeing God hath drawne vs to himselfe, is not this a most streight obligation to make vs knit our selues wholy vnto him, to make vs hold the obedience of the doctrine prouided vs in his name? Let vs therefore learne so to cleaue vnto our God, that wee renounce all that we might forge of our owne braine, that wee stagger no more hither or thither, or be moued and tossed in any sorte whatsoeuer. Knowe we that there is one God, which will possesse vs for his people, & so wholie possesse vs, that his honour be not taken from him, to be bestowed on creatures: knowe we that he watcheth ouer vs, to the ende wee shoulde acknowledge, that it is to onely whom wee must call vpon, and of whom we must looke for all

helpe and succour. Also for that he will receiue vs, and keepe vs in his bonds, let vs walke as in his presence: so that we worshippe him as our onely God, not onely by way of ceremonies and outward protestation: but sincerely and in heart, as we knowe that his seruice is spirituall. Briefly, let vs yelde vp our selues, our soules, and bodies, to be gouerned by him, that he may be in all thinges honoured and glorified.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faults, beseeching him that he will make vs feele them better than we haue done, that we may be led to a true and earnest repentaunce, that he will mortifie vs more and more, cutting off our vaine and disordered affections, to the end we may be wholie giuen to feare and honour him. And because we cannot serue him so purely as he requireth, whyles we be held bounde vnder the infirmities of our flesh, pray we him that he will beare with vs, vntill he hath clothed vs with his righteousnesse. Also let vs say humbly from our hearte, Almightie God our heauenly father.

The 2. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

8 Thou shalt make thee no graue image, or any likenes of thing that is in heauen aboue, or which is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters vnder the earth.

9 Thou shalt neither bowe thy selfe vnto them, nor serue them: for I thy Lorde thy God am a iealous God, visiting the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, euen to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

10 And shewing mercie vnto thousandes of them that loue me, and keepe my Commaundements.

Because

BEcause men are so farre inclined to corrupt the worship of God by wicked superstitions, it behoueth that God feare them by his threates, to the ende they might be as it were forceably kept backe when otherwise they would carry themselues headlong by their vanitie to imaginations of God cleane contrarie to all that which is agreeable with his maiestie. And this is a point worthy to be noted. For it seemeth (as we haue alreadie touched) that it was now needelesse to forbid the people of Israel to make any images, after they had knowen the liuing God. But because of our cursed inclination, it was requisite that this so streight a forbidding as wee see, should be adioyned. And this is done as wel for vs, as for them: because this vice is as it were settled in our bones. If God shewe not that he will not suffer idolatrie, and that we be not wounded with such threates, there is not one amongst vs which forgeth not an infinite number of fooles, and by this meane the honour due to the liuing God is transported vnto our fantasies. Let vs note then, that here we are reproued of hauing a cursed and peruerse nature, which alwaies draweth vs to superstition, and that there is great need that we be holde backe after some violent and forcible maner. For of our owne good will we neuer serue God in such sort, as that we imagine nothing of him, but that which is pleasant to his maiestie. And withal we may note, to what purpose our good meanings serue vs. For if there bee any thing in which men may excuse themselues with this, that they thinke they do wel, it is when they forge vnto themselues idols. For to what ende do they make them, but to serue God, to be stirred vp to a greater deuotion, and to haue a more strong assurance that God will heare them in their requests? Where then are the men which may pretende this colour of good meaning: but yet we see on the contrarie side, that God hereby is grieuously angred: we see how he pronounceth an horrible sentence of condemnation vpon all them, which leaue themselues to be gouerned by their thinking and meaning. They will say that, and the thing is so, That they thinke to serue God: but what? he accepteth no such seruice, but rather accurseth it, and

that by good reason, as we haue alreadie shewed, his maiestie is dis-
guised, when one will make vnto him a visible ymage. Wee are then
vntrained in this place to doe nothing as seemeth vs, especially when
there is any question of the seruice of God, that we attempt nothing
after our owne fantasies, but that we followe in all simplicitie that
which he appointeth by his worde, without adding of any thing vnto
it whatsoeuer. For assone as we shal haue declined neuer so little
herein, what euer we alledge to make our cause good, God will not
leaue vs vnpunished. For this is no vaine threate, when hee saieth,
That he is a God of gelousie and anger, which visiteth the iniquitie
of parents vpon their children. Thus ye see then two pointes which
we haue to beare in minde in this place. The one is that because we
are by nature ouer much giuen to idolatrie, this threatening of God
continue alwayes before our eyes, to the end we presume not to min-
gle any thing with his worde, or to deuise any kinde of idolatrie, but
that we serue him purely according to his nature, and not according
to our fantasie. And let this be for one note. The other is, that wee
likewise wee must not preferre our good meanings, to fulfill that
which wee shall haue inuented and deuised: but contrarywise let vs
remember, that the principal seruice which God requireth, is obedi-
ence. Now let vs come to the woordes which are set downe in this sen-
tence: God saith in the first place, I am thy euerliuing thy God, or thy
mighty and strong one. Here againe he setteth himselfe against al ye
gods. For we haue alreadie seene, that to remedie the superstitions of
the Israelites, he declared himselfe in his maiestie. Now this is to
take all excuse from men, when God once manifesteth himselfe vnto
them. When we know not which is the true religion, neither can dis-
cerne who is the true God, it is no maruel if al our senses wander, &
we runne hither & thither without any right directing of our wayes,
as plaine wanderers: but when God hath once declared himselfe
vnto vs, and we know his trueth, then is there greate reason that
all our deuises fall to the grounde, and that we abyde stedfast in
that, whereof wee haue knowledge. For this cause GOD repea-
teth this thing, That he hath declared himselfe to his people, and
hath chosen them to himselfe, and that he will gouerne them, euen by
the lawe which is nowe published. And of purpose nameth hee him-
selfe a gelous God, and wrathful. For this woord importeth both these

things.

thinges. And agayne, although he bee called heere, God, notwithstanding the woord he heere vseth, is derined from a woord which signifieth strength & feare. Nowe when hee nameth himselfe gelous, there is no doubt but he meaneth thereby too signifie, that he will not suffer that his honour bee violated, or that he be robbed of that which properly belongeth vnto him, to haue it geuen to creatures, that hee can not patiently endure any such treatherie. Therefore when the honor of God shall not be so prized on our part as it deserueth, let vs knowe that he will not neglect it. For we shal seele in the ende that hee forgetteth not himselfe, but will maintayne his glorie, as he declareth throughout all the holy Scripture. Verily if awe had but one droppe of true vnderstanding, awes woulde be zealous for the honour of our God, so that awe should not be stirred vp to reuenge the wronges of our selues endeuour to accomplishe that which is written in the Psalmes, that is, That his zeale shoulde deuoure vs: that we shoulde burne within our selues when we see his maiestie reprochfully abused, it woulde be (I say) that we should then feele within vs a burning and consuming fire. But why? Wee are carelesse too maintayne our owne honour, and in the meane while wee will suffer that the honour of the Lorde be trampled vnder feete, that men make their sport and game of it, that men haue it in derision and mockerie, or at least that men mangle and teare it in peeces. And therfore when the worlde shall be wholly set on idolatry, whenall of vs shall neglect our duetie in the seruice of God, shall not our Lorde seeke he hath reproued our lasinesse and vnthankfulnesse in this point, shewe that although we haue been careleslie herein, he will yet haue such a zeale as behoueth him to maintaine his honour, and that when he shall be troden vnder the feete of men, hee will execute vpon them sharpe and grieuous reuenge? Nowe to the ende that wee should knowe that being gelous in his honours behalfe, he knoweth well in what sorte to punish the idolaters, he taketh to himselfe the name of GOD, which importeth force and strength, as we haue alreadie touched: and to this ende he vseth it, that wee also when we thinke of him, should ioyne these twoo woordes together. For so hath Moses ordered matter in this place, that which is more fully opened vnto vs by the Prophete Nahum, when he saieth, The Lorde is a gelous GOD, a God of vengeance, a God which punisheth vpon that haue offended, which reserueth wrath for his enemies.

Psal. 69. 9.

Exod. 34. 7.

Nahum. 1. 2.

a God, which shall come in a whirle wind and tempest. The prophet vseth this word, that God is gelous, that is to say, that he is not forgetfull, that he hath not his eyes closed and shut vp, when men contemne him, but that he marketh that, that all which is done is registred before him, that he will one day take account of it. Now after that he hath spoke of this affection, that is to say, that God will mainteine his honour, he sheweth by and by that he hath wherewith too doe it, that he is armed with force and might to punish his enimies, & that they cannot by any meanes escape his hand. And to that end he speaketh of a horrible tempest. Here ye why he speaketh of vengeance, & moreouer therewithall, that though God dissemble for a time, that yet he reformeth not with sodainesse his enemies, and will in a conuenient season and when he seeth best, execute them whom they have had to doe, and that they beleeue not that he is lying GOD so anger. Marke well what Moses pronounceth heere namely, that God will haue his honour esteemed of vs. And although we think our selues to be vnpunished, when we haue polluted his seruice, & contemned it, in what sort soeuer, yet in his time he will shew that he is not forgetfull of himself, but that he will maintaine and defend his owne honour. Here is one poynt to be noted. Moreouer the aduersary hath he is also mighty enough to put in execution his crueltie. For the Lord is not as mortall men, which can but threaten & chafe, when their honor is foiled, & they contemned and despised, but they haue not the meanes to worke the reuenge they would. God is not such a one: he is armed with might & power to confound all his enimies. Truely we must not imagine in God any humane affections, such as with which we see men to be moued and carried away. There is neither anger nor wrath in GOD. But because we cannot comprehend him as he is, it behoueth that he apply himself to our rudenesse and so, as often as the Scripture speaketh of wrath, anger, and indignation: this is not that God is changeable, that he pretendeth vs to be moued as we are with passions. For he alwayes abideth in one estate: yea, there is no shadow of chaunge in him. As S. Saint Iames vseth the same similitude, to declare, that in his nature & being there is no chaunge. But because we cannot comprehend not the iudgements of God, but by these tokens of anger, wrath and indignation: for that cause the Scripture speaketh after this manner, & we also more commonly vse this phrase. That is a

Iam. 1. 17.

&

feareful and horrible thing, as God heere declareth, to fall into his handes: and aboue al, when we shall haue peruerted the puritie of his seruice by our wicked inuentions, rashly attempting that which our braine hath fondly conceiued. Let vs therefore knowe we shal feele with whome we haue had to deale, and that he is a greater maister, than with whom we might thinke to dally after such a fashion. Now withall, God is not heere contented to threaten them which by idolatrie are turned away from his lawe, in saying only that he wil punish them in their owne persons, but he extendeth his vengeance to their whole posteritie. I am (saith he) a gelous God, which punish the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, vnto the third & fourth generation. It seemeth at the first sight, that this is euil agreeing to the iustice of God, to punish the childre for the sinnes of the fathers & mothers. And beside that, natural reason is against it. Wee see what is spoken concerning this point, to the Prophet Ezechiel: namely, That he which shal haue sinned, shal beare his own paiment, and that the sonne shal not beare the iniquitie of the father, nor the father the iniquitie of the sonne. Loe then, this place heere might seeme somewhat too austere and rigorous, which should seeme to derogate from the righteousnesse of God: for sinne, bringeth his hyre, that is, the death of him which committeth it. Yee then which is innocent, why shal hee die? And albeit this reason were not sufficient, we haue the testimonie of the holy scripture, where God declareth, that hee will not punish the innocent children for the sinnes of their fathers. For he reproueth the Iewes for this blasphemie which rainе much in their mouth, and whereof they had nowe made a common prouerbe: Our fathers haue eaten sowre grapes, and our teeth are set on edge. Wee are not thus rigorously handled for the faultes we haue committed, for wee haue liued as behoued vs, but hee grateth heere vpon the sinne of our fathers. Thus the Iewes murmured against God.

Hebr. 10. 31.

Rom. 6. 23.

Ezec. 18. 2.

Now he sweareth that this blasphemie shal no more reigne among them. But for al this, when al shal be wel considered, there is no contrarietie in these places. For in the place of Ezechiel god vnderstandeth no other thing, but that those which are punished of him, cannot alledge their innocencie, that they cannot say that God doeth them any wrong or iniurie, if he vse them sharply: for they shal find themselues

guiltie euery one in his owne person, and that he shal bee declared iust, when euery one shal see that hée exceedeth neither measure nor reason.

Nowe this is also certaine, that when God punisheth the children, because of the fathers: yet ceaseth he not to bee iust in his chastisementes: for the children on their part being well examined, shall bee founde faultie. I say yet further, that they can no sooner come forth of the wombe of their mother, but they commit many notable and manifest sinnes, and such as might bee knowen to the whole worlde. For what offspring are wee? What bring wee forth by nature, but sinne and wickednesse? See then the infantes which are alreadie sinners, yea, béeing in the wombe of their mother, they are condemned before God, there is yet no euill perceiued in them, howbeit their nature is altogither corrupt and sinfull. They haue a séede of wickednesse in them, & because of this original sinne which is descended from Adam vpon al mankind, behold they are already vnder condemnation. Now seeing it is so, that the litle infantes are not exempted from the anger & malediction of God, it is certaine when hée punisheth them, this shal not bée without good cause: but we shal alwaies know, that he procéedeth herein in al equitie and iustice, as an vpright iudge: by greater reason they which are elder & further stryken in yéeres, are punished as not innocent, for one shall finde them by many degrées more faultie. And so as concerning the place of Ezechiel the case is cléere, that God punisheth not the innocent children for the transgression of their fathers, for the faults shalbe also founde in themselues. As for this, when he saith, That he punisheth the iniquitie of fathers vpon the children, let vs consider how this is done, and then this hard knot shal be easily vntyed.

First then let vs knowe, that God oweth vs nothing, and that if he bestowe any benefite vppon vs, this is altogether of his méere liberalitie, not that he is any thing beholding vnto vs. In the meane whyle, if hée will vse his rigour towardes vs, he may leaue vs in condemnation as wée are. Let God onely withdrawe his mercie, and shewe himselfe iudge ouer the whole World, and what shall become of vs? Surely wée shall all perishe, there is no remedie: litle and greate, fathers and children, without exception (I say) wée are all condemned, if GOD draw vs not

out

out of the curse in whiche wée are, and that by his frée mercie, without the least occasion of béeing bounde vnto vs. So nowe, séeing GOD may bring vs all to destruction, if it please him to vse his goodnesse and clemencie towardes some, if hée call them to him selfe, if hée deliuer them from this déepe dungeon of damnation, in which they are: may any one accuse him for this? May any one reproue him herein, the least that may bée? No. For our eye must not beeuill, if hée of his goodnesse taketh pitie and compassion of his creatures.

And although hée vse not the like measure towardes all, yet notwithstanding wée must haue our mouth closed vp: or rather eyes open, not to murmure, but to confesse that al which he doth, is in equitie and iustice, although it surmount our sense and reason. For wée comprehende not alwayes the reason why GOD disposeth so of men, and yet must wée laye aside our prating, and learne to reuerence and adore God in his iudgementes, when they shall bée ouer high for vs, ouer wonderfull, ouer secrete. Howe euer it bée, let this generall rule abide certeine, that is to say, That God might leaue vs in our destruction, wherein wée are, if so it pleased him, and that by this meanes the whole worlde shoulde perishe: but because it pleaseth him to shewe himselfe gentle and pitifull, not towardes all, but towardes a parte, sée what discerneth the one from the other.

Nowe, herevppon hée leaueth them, as it séemeth good vnto him, in the curse wherein they are borne. And if one demaunde why God vseth his mercie towardes some, when on others he executeth his seueritie? It is certeine, the first and principall cause is vnknowne vnto vs, neither ought wée to enquire after it. And why? For it behoueth that all our senses bée locked vp captiues in that behalfe, and that wée confesse that God hath libertie to chose whome hée pleaseth, and to refuse the rest. But howsoeuer the case standeth, hée maketh this promise to the faithfull, that hée wil take pitie on their children, and that as hée hath begunne his mercie in their persons, so hée will continue it in their posteritie, euen to a thousande generations. Séeing God hath made this promise to his seruauntes, wée sée nowe there is some cause why God hath pitie of the one, rather than of the other.

Againe on the contrarie part, hée threatneth the vnfaithfull that hée will curse them, not onely in themselues, but also in their issue, and in them which shall descende from their stocke and familie. But nowe let vs come to the mercie which God sheweth, and to the punishmentes he executeth. His mercie then is not in this, that hée blesseth the children of the faithfull with riches, with health, or other like thinges: or that hée maketh them to prosper to the worldward: those are not the chiefe blessinges of God, that is not the ende whereat he beginneth, but rather he sheweth them his goodnesse and mercie, when hée gouerneth them by his holie spirite, when hee giueth them the marke and seale of the adoption of his children, when hée correcteth them, and purgeth them from their sinnes, to reforme and renewe them to his image and likenesse. Yée sée then the mercie which God extendeth to the children of the faithfull, that is to say, he suffereth them not to remaine in their corruption and wickednesse, but that he reformeth them and gouerneth them by his holie spirite. This being done, he continueth his mercie further more and more, and maketh them to prosper euen in this world, vntil the fulnesse of his mercie be heaped vpon them: namely, vntill hée hath drawne them out of this worlde into his kingdome, and giueth them there the fruition of euerlasting life. On the contrarie side, whereas he punisheth the iniquitie of fathers vpon the children, this is as much to say, as that hée will leaue the stocke of them in the same plight, they are in. There is a wicked man, there is a despiser of God, there is an hypocrite, there is an vnfaithfull and vnbeléeuing man: well he shal haue children: God will, as wée may sée, forget them, and account them for straungers. And whereas he acknowledgeth them not in the number of his owne, he daineth not nor vouchsafeth to shew himself a father towardes them. So he leaueth them as forsaken, and then it must néedes be that Satan possesse them, & being destitute of the spirit of God, what other thing may happen vnto them than euil and mischiefe, so as they procure to themselues the wrath and anger of God more and more? Nowe then doth our Lorde punish them without good cause? Can they say they are innocent and guiltlesse? No. For there is sufficient fault in them before hande. Wée sée then a great deale the better howe this which God hath pronounced by Ezechiel is true: namely, that hée which hath sinned shall beare the payment and punishment as he hath deserued, and that the innocent

shall

shall not bee punished for the cause of the sinner and transgressour. Notwithstanding, wee see also, that not without cause hee declareth, that hee will punish the iniquitie of fathers vppon the children. For why? It is in him to shewe mercie to the children of the wicked and vnbeleeuing, or of the contemners of his worde, or of hypocrites, which abuse his name: it is (I say) in the choice and libertie of God, to withdrawe his grace from their posteritie. And when their children are estraunged from God, what reteine they but the filth and corruption of Adam? There is nothing else in them, but sinne and wickednesse. And therefore needes it must be, that they bee enimies to God. Yee see then howe he punisheth them in iustice, and that they can not shift themselues out of his hand, in saying that he doeth them wrong, that he is ouer cruell towardes them. It behoueth that curssrie mouth bee stopped in that behalfe. True it is, that a man can neuer satisfie and content the rebellious, as wee see there are many which aduaunce themselues against God in this case, with suche boldnesse and presumption, that good men which are sober and modest, are ashamed to behold them, but leaue we these dogges to barke their fill, and in the meane time let vs glorifie our God in all humilitie, knowing at least wise this one thing, that he hath this authoritie, and might, to shew fauour and mercie to whom it pleaseth him. And for this cause we must conclude, that if God withdrawe his spirite from the posteritie of the wicked, hee may not be accused of cruelties. For they are in themselues punishable, when they are in this sorte forsaken of him, and are not gouerned by his holie spirite. Let vs then note well that this sentence hath no contrarietie to that of Ezechiel. Nowe let vs returne to see the meaning of Moses in these wordes. There is no doubt, but by his manner of speaking in this place, hee woulde imprinte a greater feare in vs, than if barely and simplie he had saide: God will punishe you, when you shal haue corrupted his seruice, when you shall haue chaunged any thing in religion, when you shall haue deuised and fashioned any image or likenesse of him, thinke not that you shall escape his vengeance: for he will not suffer that his honour be defaced, and brought to nothing in suche sorte. If Moses had thus spoken, men as ouerharomed and slow of nature, would not haue bene sufficiently moued with feare. Therefore he heere passeth further: God (saieth he) will not onely punishe you in your owne persons, but hee will extende his vengeaunce vp-

pon your offspring, and not onely on your children, but he will pursue it euen to the further ende of your linage, in such sort that you shall for euer feele his wrath, as a kindling fire, and after your death, men shall beholde the signes and markes of your iniquitie: GOD shall place you in such ignominie and reproche, that you shalbe as spectacles to the worlde: and although you be rotten & putrified under the earth, yet shall his vengeaunce pursue you so, that your sinnes shall bee grated on, and called to remembraunce from age to age: and men shall knowe that you haue rebelled against him, whiche shewed you so many of his benefites, that at least you shoulde haue béene as the sheepe of his flocke, to bee gouerned by him and his worde. Nowe then let vs take héede, wee bee not ouer sluggish and past sense, when God in this manner stirreth vp and awaketh vs. Truely if onely in one worde, or by some exteriour signification hee shoulde signifie his anger, wée ought to bée touched with great feare: but since wée are dull vppon the spurre, yet at least then, when God declareth that after hée hath punished vs, hée will yet followe on his vengeaunce vppon our posteritie, and that after our death it must néedes bée, that those which shalbe begotten of vs bee condemned: when (I say) God speaketh in this wise, let vs then bee more attentiue to walke in his feare, and to turne our selues vnto him, that we prouoke him not to anger, being as it is so fearefull and terrible. Thus we see in what sorte we are to make our profit by this texte. Nowe hée addeth further, Of them which hate him: in which worde he comprehendeth all the transgressours of the law. If then one demand whether all those, whiche turne them selues from the obedience of God, hateth him therefore? This place here answereth, Yea: not that it séemeth so to them, and yet the truth is so. And we ought here not to rest vppon our owne iudgement, for God onely is a competent Iudge to pronounce sentence herein. And because that men, when they giue them selues ouer to worke wickedlie, will not say, neither thinke so in heart, that they hate God, it behoueth that this vice should be discouered. It is true that hypocrites will make a faire shewe, that the loue of God causeth them to shew some good countenaunce. And in déede it may haue some small séede, but it is a bastard and vicious séede. So then this hatred is not apparant in hypocrites, neither in many other which lead a disordered & dissolute life: but yet is it in them, though we know it not, for as all malefactours & licentious

tious liuers woulde there were neither iudge, nor order, nor policie in the worlde: so all they which willingly & of their own accord would not acknowledge themselues Gods subiects, they spite him, & coulde be contented he were plucked out of heauen. This appeareth sufficiently in them, which are wholy giuen ouer & peruerted. When men haue loosed the bridle to al iniquitie, they cannot beare any correctiō, and are so farre from being tractable to be taught, when they are threatened, they grind the teeth, they storme & rage, they are furious, and mad against God. This hating then of God is manifest ynough in them which haue granted themselues a more outragious libertie of doing ill, in thē which are caried away as with a tempest in their wickednesse, & are fully settled in their sinnes. In others which haue yet some feare, & are in some sorte moued, when we speake of God, & of his iudgements, this appeareth not, & yet there is already in them an hatred of God. Truely they thinke it not, but God seeth much more cleare than wee, and when thinges are hid and vnknowen vnto vs, he noteth them. We must alwayes beare in minde, howe Saint John saith, That God is much greater than our consciences: that is to say, That if our consciences beare vs witnesse of our faultes, God shal not sleepe in the meane tyme. And so let vs briefly remember, that al they which conforme not themselues to the obedience of God, and which humble not themselues vnder his maiestie, to serue and honor him, that al they hate him, although by effect they shewe it not at first, & that men can not iudge so of them. And for the same cause we see why in like maner, when God speaketh of them, which keepe his commandements, he beginneth with his loue. He saith, That he wil shewe mercy on thousand generations to them which loue him. And why? For it is not possible to desire to honor God, and to be his subiects, if we haue not a feeling of this loue, wherof he here speketh. And this may serue vs for a good lesson, as we shal see hereafter, that Moses when he woulde giue a short abridgement of the Law, saith, What doeth the Lorde thy God Israel require of thee, but that thou loue him with thy whole hart, and that thou cleaue to him? We shal neuer (I say) know, what it is to yeld obedience to Gods lawe, and to rule our selues according to it, if wee begynne not at this loue. And why? For God requireth a willing seruice, he wil not that wee serue him with a seruile feare, but his desire is that we come vnto his worship with a free & cheerfull courage, & take euen a pleasure in obeying

1. *John* 3. 20.

Deut. 10. 12.

and

& honoring of him. Now this cannot be except we loue him. Wherefore let vs note, that the beginning, the fountaine, the fundation and roote of obedience is this loue of God, so as wee bee not forced to come vnto him, but euē take a singular delight and pleasure therin, knowing that this is our true happinesse that wee desire nothing else, but to bee ruled by his will, and to bee in all pointes conformable to the same. And moreouer let vs note, that this loue cannot bee in vs before wee haue tasted of the goodnesse of our God. For as long as wee conceiue God our aduersarie and contrarie partie, wee can not, but flee him. Will we then loue him? Will wee bee reformed to his obedience to take a pleasure in his seruice? Wee must first know, that hee is our father and sauiour, and that he desireth nothing more than to shew himselfe louing, & fauorable towards vs. When we shall so haue tasted the great loue he beareth vs, then shal wee bee stirred vp to loue him as our father, and when this loue shalbee in vs, there is no doubt, but wee shal obay him, and his law shall beare rule in our thoughtes, and in our affections, and in al our members. For what is the cause that we are so rebellious against God, but that we hate him, as wee haue before saide? Againe, on the contrarie side, the loue of God shal leade vs to serue him, and to set our selues, & our doings in order according to his iustice, in such sorte, that a man shal see a certaine conformitie & melodie betweene the law of God, & al our desires & affections. But yet the better to vnderstande this, let vs consider what God is, for hee will not bee knowen according to our nature: and when we shal heare him speake, it is not ynough to yelde him this title of God, but hee will bee knowen as hee is: namely, iust, and good, that he is the fountaine and perfection of al wisedome, of al power, of al vprightnesse, of all equitie and iustice. Now then let vs conceiue God as hee is, that is, with his iustice, and vprightnesse, and equitie: and then shal wee not desire but to frame & fashion our selues vnto him: contrariewise, when wee shal loue that which is euil, and shalbe wrapped in wickednesse as in a garment, it cannot be, but we must hate him. And why? Because here is no question of some bare nature & being, neither ought we to imagine God as an ydol, but we must comprehend him in his iustice. If then wee shal hate this which is in God, that is to say, his iustice and vprightnesse, it must needs be that we hate him also. For he cannot deny himself, he cannot be disguised, he cānot be transfigured after our fansie,

he al-

he alwayes abideth like him selfe. So then, as I haue alreadie touched, al they which loue God, they faile not to be obedient to his lawe, they cease not to obserue and keepe his commaundementes, for these thinges are knit together, and are inseparable. And this we haue to beare in minde vpon this place. Nowe hereby hence we are to take a warning, that we haue in greater horror, than we are wont to haue, all rebellion, all sinne, and offences. For it is no small thing to be proclaimed the enimies of God, and to make open warre with him. Now, it is so, that we cannot turne our selues from him, nor cast off his yoke, but we shalbe conuicted to haue beene his enemies, and to haue waged open battell with him. And loe, is not this an execrable thing? Let vs therfore learne to haue our sinnes and offences in horrour and detestation, forasmuch as by them, we are accused to be the enemies of God, and that he also muste shewe him selfe our aduersarie partie. Withall we are also warned to come vnto God with a pure and sincere affection. For it is not enough to withhold our feete, and our handes, and our eyes from euill doing, but it behoueth that our heart go before, and that God be serued of vs with a true meaning minde and vpright affection: and this affection must not be forced and constrained, but it ought to proceede from a true loue of God. Therefore, when we will rightly obserue his lawe, we must first know, that God is vnto vs a louing hearted father, gentle and fauourable vnto vs, to the ende we may be led to yelde vnto him like loue & affection. And withal, let vs not think to mocke & deceiue our selues, in professing that we loue God, if in the meane while this be not shewed in the whole course of our life. For when there is mention made of the loue of God, Moses addeth, that they which loue him, doe also keepe his commaundementes. It behoueth then that our life be answerable in this behalfe, and that it beare witnesse whether we loue God, or whether we hate him. For the rest which followeth, it is not without cause that God making comparison of his wrath and vengeance, with his fauour and mercie, saith, That he will punishe them that hate him to the thirde and fourth generation, and that he will shewe mercie to them that loue him in a thousand generations. For by this he declareth that, which is better and more fully expressed in other sentences of the scriptures that is, That he is slow to anger, greatly inclined to compassion and pitie, that he is patient & of long suffering, that his anger endureth but a while, that his mer-

Psal. 103. 8
Psa. 30. 5.

nie is to life, & endureth for euer. Ye see then the true nature of God, that is, that he desireth nothing more, than to draw men vnto him by all lenitie and gentlenesse, and to vse his mercie and goodnesse towardes them. When he punisheth them this is as it were against his nature, not but that it is agreeable to God, as well to punish, as to shewe mercie: but hee will shewe vs, that his goodnesse is much more greater: and briefely, that hee is not sharpe and rigorous, but bestrous to lay open his hart towardes vs, if we would suffer him. For in verie deede he will bee knowne gratious and pitifull. And this is that wherein his principal glorie shineth. Therefore let vs note wel, that not for naught Moses here assigneth a thousand generations to the mercy of God, and restraineth his wrath & vengeance but here or foure generations. As if he did say: It is very true that our Lord will not leaue superstition vnpunished, when you shall haue perverted his seruice, and defaced his honour, busying your selues in your own dreames, and vayne fantises: you shal surely feele the punishment, and your children after you shall feele it: and when the fire of his wrath and indignation shal be kindled among you, it shall not bee so soone quenched as you thinke: but yet for all that, God will not cease to bee pitifull, and his mercie shalbe alwayes greater than his anger. And in verie deede, as God by the threat we haue here heard, would reteine the worlde in true religion, to the ende it should make no idols nor poppittes to counterfeit him, so he would by his promise here contained, as it were allure vs to beare him the loue and reuerence which we owe vnto him, and he desireth rather to winne vs by his gentlenesse, than to restraine vs by his threateninges. See how then in what sorte he speaketh: My children, thinke not that I wil deale roughly with you: it is true, if you prouoke mee, I shal not suffer that men make a sport and game of me, but when I haue declared mine anger, I desire yet rather to traine you, and winne you to my selfe by mercie and gentlenesse. I protest then, and declare vnto you, if you abide wholy and sincerely in my obedience, I will continue to bestowe my benefites vpon you, euen to a thousand generations: so that your children after your death, shall finde mee the same I haue beene to you. Behold what we haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

And moreouer, for conclusion, let vs note, that it is not without great cause, that God placeth here this worde of Mercie, although it

be as a reward of the seruice which is done him. He might well haue saide, I will consider the seruice of them which shall haue honoured and worshipped me, which shall haue loued me in obseruing my lawe, I will shewe them that it is no lost labour to haue serued and honoured me, as they that haue done. You might haue spoken so. But he saith, I will shewe mercie. And how so? Seemeth it not, that if we serue God, as he hath appointed, he owetb vs a recompense? Howbeit he declareth that he will bestowe a benefite vpon them which haue honoured him, and obserued his commandementes, and that this is not by any obligation of our debte, or because of their merites and deserues; so, he vseth herein mercie. So that worde of Mercie, is to beate downe all pryde of men in such sorte, that they may not boast of their workes, as if they were worthy of reward and payment: but rather knowe, that God ment to declare by this, that when we serue him the best that we can, wee haue alwayes néede to be borne withal of him, and that he pardoneth vs our vices and our infirmities.

Thus are there two things which we haue to note in this place. The one is, that although we should serue God in al puritie, if he recompense vs, it is not of any duetie he oweth vnto vs. For in deede, from whence commeth this, that wee haue serued him, but from his méere and only grace? And what then may he owe vs? The other is, that we shal be al founde guiltie, when it shal please him to examine vs according to the exact measure of his iustice. So then, in that God recompenseth vs, when wee haue serued him, he vseth this for his mercy and goodnesse, and not that he is bounde vnto vs. Nay, which more is, he must forgiue vs our faultes, and beare with vs, euen in that which we doe well. Knowe we therefore, that GOD sheweth himselfe gentle and liberall towardes vs, in that it pleaseth him to beare with our infirmities, making vs to taste his mercie, where he might of right make vs taste his rigour. For let vs not thinke, but without this mercy we should be all perishe: yea, though we should enforce our selues to obay him, we should notwithstanding be alwayes founde faultie, were it not that he would vse this mercy towards vs, of which he here speaketh. So then this is that whither vnto we must flee for refuge, if we will be assured of our saluation. 1. Cor. 1. 10.

Now let vs call our selues to mind, before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him that he will make vs feele them better than we haue done, to the end he may lead vs to a true repentance, and that being taught to feare him, we tremble and stand in such awe of him alone as he shal threaten vs with his anger, that we may conceiue the force thereof, that being humbled therwith, we run to his fatherly goodnes, not doubting but that if he hath once begunne to shewe himselfe our father and Sauiour, he will continue it euē after our death, if so be we withdraw not our selues from him by our wickednesse and rebellion. That it will please him to graunt this grace not only to vs, but to all peoples and nations of the earth, &c.

The 4. Sermon.

Deut. Chap.

¶ Thou shalt not take the name of the Lorde thy God in vaine:

for the Lorde will not holde him guiltles that taketh his [illegible]
If we feare but wickednesse, there is [illegible]
no neede that men should teache vs to [illegible]
beare reuerence vnto God. For nature [illegible]
prouideth to leade vs hereunto. For to [illegible]
what end are we created, but to liue [illegible]
vnder this worlde, but to be subiect to [illegible]
him, to whome we be beholden for all [illegible]
good giftes, and to apply our selues to [illegible]
honour and glorifie his maiestie? Be- [illegible]
hold the whole end and summe of this [illegible]
life. But for all this in steede of honouring our God, and applying our whole studies and endeuours hereunto, it fareth that we haue ensued the cleane contrarie. For some wonder haue the remembrāce of God buried, others delude and mocke him, others with ful throte and open mouth blaspheme him, so that we sufficiently declare, that we knowe not why we liue, or should haue our being. Now because there is such a vice in vs, God, to remedie it, sheweth that he is ielous to abide vs from abusing his holy name, for this is as if

[illegible]

were to enhalle vs: and therfore the path for him that is vnworthy is not taken in vayne. By these words we ought diligently to consider what is the right and lawful vse of his name. Moreouer it is true that we are not worthy to take in our mouth the name of the LORD, in what sort soeuer it be, for we must consider of that which Esay speaketh in the 6. Chap. I am a man of polluted lips, & I dwell in the midst of a people, which is altogether filthy and professed vncleanesse. Esay. 6. 5. Seeing then that we haue such filthinesse and vncleannesse in vs, it is certaine that we cannot take the name of God in our mouth, were it not that God of his goodnesse would that we should vse his name, to the end to glorifie him withal. Let vs then note wel, that when it is said, That we take not the name of God in vaine, that the Lord requireth vs often to thankful confession of his name, as he hath commanded vs, and ioyning therewithal a true rule which is conteined in his word. For this is the holy vse of his name, by which we may sanctifie his name. But to the end that this may be more clearly vnderstood, we must marke, that God vnder one kind doth here comprehend what soeuer belonging to his worship, to the end he should not (as with all seuere and seuerest rigor) punish the transgressions of the first table, whether it be of those kinds of prophaning his name, that are here specified, or of the other, when any question is offered. Wherefore when we are commanded to vse that he lendeth vs his name, to the end we might therewithall deale with our neighbours, & if there were any controuersie among vs, it might be ended by his mouth, or finally, that it should not be lefte as a matter vncertaine, but that we should [illegible] as the thing should be altogether certaine & [illegible] confirmation. Is not this an inestimable grace that God vouchsafeth himselfe so much as to commit vnto vs his name? But why? For it is certaine that the maiestie of God is so great, that it ought not to be abused so farre that we should vse it to apply him selfe vnto vs. How much greater then is our faulte, if we prophane the name of God in our other speeches, which is vsed not onely when we are forsworne, but if we take the name of God in our mouthes easily and at random, when we are moued to speake the word of truth in all sobrietie and discretion, and when the thing which is in controuersie is determined, in such manner as we haue declared, and finally when we vse the name of God in [illegible]

Heb. 6. 16.

vntruth.

vntruth. For many dispense with them selues, because before men they can not be conuicted of periurie. And why? When they name the best sos of the coate, they paunte and trimme their matters so well, that it shall seeme very well to men they speake the truth, & are not periured: but GOD alloweth not any such subtilties. Let him not then thinke to bee acquited and absolued before him, whom men shall haue died such poleies, such shiftes and slye practises. And so in lyinge wee see, that all they which take the name of God in other wise than it becometh and vse simplicitie, blaspheme him. Thus much for this poinct. Nowe as for them, which sweare rashly and without cause, they declare sufficientlie, that they make no other account, than to iest with GOD. It is true they protest the contrarie, they will still say their meaning is not so: but this is but hypocrisie. For therein sufficientlie appeareth, that they beare no reuerence vnto God. For mortall man be he neuer of vs, wee take not his name in vaine, nor will not that any make a scorne of him, and flouts him: and when a matter of plaie and mockerie is proposed, we can not suffer that he be brought in any vile fashion. For what shall this to be in this infinite and diuine Maiestie will wee haue greater priuiledge than the liuing GOD? Wee are vile caitiues, and rotten ashes of the earth, and yet will not be had in honour and estimation? And shall our GOD in the meane time be placed beneathe as any vnderling? Thus then we see, that there was at this day no religion in the worlde, although a man make a shewe and quite renounce of being Christian, that notwithstanding vnderstand, what it is to feare GOD, to honour him, serue him, and yeelde him the seruice which appertaineth vnto him. For howe in this, that the name of GOD must be euer in our mouths? Wee can not bargaine for the words of our seruing him in the due order that appertaineth vnto him. If the honour of GOD were of price among vs, it were not possible but wee should from such superfluitie of othes, which now adaies is vsed in our honour in vs. But nowe a deepe enemie mocketh a game of it, and when a man is reprehended for sweering, he will thinke he hath great wrong done him.

Nowe if one should maintaine any matter publike, or priuate for his profite, there would bee much grieuing therewith yeld, hee should make his complaintes thereof, but if hee

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thinke the scale of God to be grieuous, when they heare the like threatnings of his grauntie: for what quarels are made with vs, for an othe spite rifle and all, some they grind their teeth at it. Now when the world is come into such a possession of contemning God, and men haue habited themselues therein, is not this a signe that his maiestie is not touching our regarde? And albeit, men yelde vnto themselues such an outragious libertie vnder this shadowe, that the thing is ordeined but once, and that of custome is made a lawe: yet will God in the ende shewe, that his name is more deere vnto him than men haue hold it, and though we sell it good cheape, it shall cost vs deare, and with greuous vantage: and it shalbe in the ende that the lande wyll confesse it beene cursed sore, which hath beene defiled and made vnfruitfull by our sinnes, to iudgement against vs. In like wise all the benefites which we haue receiued, and which God with a liberall hande hath bestowed on vs, shall come into account for our condemnation, for asmuch as we haue not knowen him, which hath beene the authour of them, to honour him as he deserueth. Wherefore let vs first of all learne to obserue this rule: namely, that God hauing graciously ioyned vs, and vsed so great gentlenesse towardes vs, we be not lothsome and vnthankefull in the seruice of him: but that we be willing and content to conforme our whole liues to his holy will: by which meanes of his we may sufficiently knowe, that he is more than a father vnto vs. But withall he warneth vs, to take so much the more diligent heede to our selues, from all wicked othes. For as for periuries (as we haue said) this is a villainous outrage which we doe to God. For inasmuche as his truethe is conuerted into a lie: we are falsifiers therof as much as in vs lieth. Now is it then a mortall and deadlie offence. But this is not enough to keepe our selues from forswearing, but our othes also must be sober, and the name of God must not be tolled vp e down among vs as a Tennis ball: but it behoueth that there be some great necessitie which may hold vs restrayned, when we make mention of it. Now forasmuch as the power is in our othes, that God hath all superioritie ouer vs; by this we may vnderstand, that al the othes which are made by creatures are wicked and intollerable, as proceeding from superstition: as among the Papistes one will sweare by Saint Anthonie, an other by Saint Iohn, which is almuch as if one would make idols of them. And to the end we must alwayes returne backe to that sentence which I haue before alleaged of the Apostle, that

we

late declare Dauid to be our Superiour: yea, our Soueraigne, when we sweare by his name? And this is the cause why when God threatneth, to chastise vs in his iudgements, or happily to awaken vs when he seeth vs harde hearted in our sinnes, and that we shall not feele of his iudgements, yet notwithstanding he reserueth to himselfe this honour: whereof it shalbe further handled in the ninth Chapter of this booke. And so they which sweare by creatures, are idolaters. Also by this purpose also, when there is mention made of superstitions, the others of men are put in as witnesses to condemne them, that they haue turned themselues from the purity of the lawe. The Prophets, namely Jeremie, which haue charge to conduct and leade the people, muste teach them to sweare by the name of God, that is, that all other othes be laid aside, and that creatures be not mingled, and brought in, when any thing by othe is to be confirmed. Moreouer, when it is here spoken of the name of God, let vs note, that we are not onely forbidden to pronounce this worde, but that the substance thereof is heere considered: for God regardeth the dede. As there are some which sweare not expressely by the name of God, and yet notwithstanding they ceasse not to offende & transgresse against this commandement. For we must alwayes haue regard to come to this whith our Lord Jesus Christ handleth in the v. Chapter of S. Matthew. When you sweare by heauen, is not this the throne of the liuing God? If you sweare by his temple, is not this the place where his maiestie abideth? If then we thinke we shall not be accused and condemned, when we expresse not the name of God in our othes, we greatly abuse our selues. Let vs not therefore thinke to beguile him in this, for the matter is altogether foolishe and childishe. And why? The heauen beareth it not a mark and token of the maiestie of God, but then how his glory is diminished. As much is to be saide of the earth, for it is his footestole, as Christe toucheth in that place which I haue alleaged. Wherefore, let vs briefly learne, that we ought to beare such a reuerence to the name of God, that all other be laide aside and vanished from among vs, but as necessitie requireth, when God suffereth vs to bee rolled his name. Otherwise let vs forbeare this rashnesse of speach, as handeling our matters in all simplicitie, to say, yea, it is so. And let vs knowe, that all which is beside this, is euill condemned by the lawe: namely, if we take the name of God in vaine. And herewith let vs make vp the deuision of the

Deut. 6. 13.

Iere. 12. 16.

Mat. 5. 34

Mat. 5. 37.

and those in which the name of God is not honoured as it deserueth, haue in them some euill. For first, when men let them flie so at all aduentures, it is a signe they scarse make any account what they say: Secondly, consider wee from whence this common swearing proceedeth, and wee shall finde that from none other thing, but that men be such lyers, so full of falshood and deceite, that when they speake the one to the other, none can beleeue that it is true which is saide. So then, it must needes bee, that there is in vs great wickednesse, considering that when God hath giuen vs a tongue, it is in part to communicate one with an other: For our tongue is the messenger of our heart, whereby wee expresse vnto others what wee haue in our mindes conceiued. Wee may then conclude, that superfluous othes proceede from the disloyaltie and rebellion of men, neither neede wee to make much enquirie, or vse any long processe in this matter: for euery one hath his owne witnesse. Howe euer it bee, let vs learne to vse in this thing such sobrietie as God commandeth, and let vs not sweare without great necessitie, and being thereunto required. But to go on somwhat further in this matter, that all may bee easily vnderstoode: there are some, who thinke that when they sweare by their faith, it is as if they swore not at all. It is true indeede, that the most part sweare nothing, for they haue no more faith then dogges, they haue no conscience nor religion. But yet this name of faith, ceaseth not therefore to be in price before God. For he holdeth it deare, and it is as an hallowed thing vnto him, which neither can, neither ought to bee vnhallowed: except wee wyllbee in great faulte, and incurre the danger of the threate here made, as wee see. So is it not sufficient not to haue pronounced expressly by God, but when one sweareth by his faith, or taketh any confirmation from that which hath any signe of the maiestie of God, his name is vnhallowed in this thing. What shal we say then of them which vse false othes to disguise their purposes, which sweare rashly, euen to sport them selues with othes: yea, to despite God by their execrable blasphemies, insomuche that hee hath neither flesh nor blood, nor nothing els which they spare? Are these onely holden faultie for vnhuing the name of God? No, but because they vse him to the greatest and most execrable reproche, that they may bee. Beholde our Lorde Iesus Christe, which made him selfe of no reputation for a time, (as Saint Paule speaketh) who being the fountaine of all life,

Deut. 6. 13.

Mat. 5. 34.

Phi. 2. 7.

life, became mortall man, hauing superiorytie and dominion ouer the Angels of heauen; toke the forme of a seruant, euen to shed his blood for our redemption, and in the ende to suffer the curse that was due vnto vs. And notwithstanding for a recompence of all this, hee must at this day be rent and torne in peeces of the Carion and stinking mouthes of them which name themselues Christians. For when they receaue by his blood, and by his death and by his woundes, and by this, & by that, is not this as much as in them lyeth to crucifie the sonne of God, and to teare him as it were in peeces? And are not these altogether worthie to bee cut off from GOD: yea, from the world, and not to bee numbred in the bande and company of creatures? Shall Iesus Christe for abasing, and humbling himselfe for vs, haue suche a reward at our handes? God vpbraideth the people of Israel in this sorte. O my people, what haue I done vnto thee? I haue brought thee out of Egypt, I haue conducted thee by the desart, I haue nourished thee in al gentlenesse and swetenesse, I haue planted thee as in my heritage, that thou shouldest haue beene as a vine which should haue borne mee good fruite, I bestowed all labour in keeping and setting thee, and must thou nowe bee turned into bitternesse vnto mee, and bring forth sowre fruite to strangle and to choke mee?

Esay.5.2.
Ier.2.21.
1.Cor.5.8.
Psal.2.10.

Aboue the same appertaineth also at this day vnto vs. For when the sonne of God, which is appointed Iudge of the worlde, shall come in the last day, he may say vnto vs, What meaneth this? You haue borne my name to bee called Christians, you haue beene baptised, in witnesse and testimonie that I was your redeemer: I haue pulled you forth of the deepe dungeon, wherein you were plunged, I haue deliuered you from euerlasting death, by the cruel death which I suffered, and for this cause I became man, I submitted my selfe to the malediction of GOD my father, to the ende you might bee blessed by my grace, and by my merite. And beholde the reward you haue rendered mee. I haue beene rent in peeces of you, I haue been as a iesting stocke, the death which I haue suffered hath beene had in derision and mockerie, my blood which is the washing of your soules, was as it were trampled vnder your feete: briefly, you haue taken all occasion to blaspheme and to raile on mee, as if I had beene some wretched, miserable, and forlorne creature.

Esay.53.3.

[illegible] shall be rebukefully told to of our soueraigne Iudge, [illegible] not this bee to thunder out a sentence to throwe him into the bottomles pit of hell? And yet notwithstanding there are very fewe of vs which deeply consider of this. For if superfluous othes were at this day had in such great horrour and detestation, as they shoulde bee, men woulde not yeelde vnto themselues any time hereafter such an outrageous boldnesse and libertie of swearing and forswearing, nay of blaspheming, as we see not to bee common and rife they are. And in the meane time we will bee very zelous for our owne honour and reputation, when the name of God is so troden vnder foote amongst vs. If one speake any thing reprochfully of ones father, he will make a great quarell of it, he enterteineth an action of slaunder: yea, many will reuenge themselues by their owne handes, and by all meanes they may on euery side: and it seemeth to them, that they haue an honest excuse to take vpon them the defence of their fathers. Beholde our soueraigne father shall sustaine wrong and iniurie: beholde in like maner our Lorde Iesus Christe, who not without cause is named The Lord of glorie, before whom euery knee ought to bow, as Saint Paule speaketh to the Philippians. Loe he (I say) shall be mocked: they which despite none could bee wrought him greater, except a man woulde spit in his face: and yet notwithstanding, they which name themselues Christians, which make a countenance of procuring and maintaining his honour, will not bee moued any iote therewith: nay, they themselues will bee the men, which will blaspheme him in most reprochable maner. Wel, for all this (as I haue saide) our Lorde will not cease to vphold his owne honour, as he himselfe speaketh, when he seeth that men are so wicked and prophane, as to violate his maiestie, so much as lyeth in them. For he witnesseth it solemnely, that he will wreake his vengeance vppon them for the same. I am the Lorde (saieth he) this is my name, and my glorie I will not giue to an other, neither my prayse to grauen images. Loe, as he will not that his honour be transferred to idols, so is it reason it extende it selfe further: namely, that if men shal falsly abuse his holy name, they shall perceiue in what price it was vnto him. And therefore let vs not waite vntil this bee accomplished vppon vs, but let vs learne to beare such reuerence vnto our God and to him that hath all soueraigne maiestie, that is, to our Lorde Iesus Christ, that we be throughly instructed to

1. Cor. 2. 8
Phi. 2. 10.
Esa. 42. 8

swearе

[illegible] is with all answered a threatening, by the which we are to vnderstand the blockishnesse of men, how that they as it were be wicked them in such sort, that they consequently the wrath and anger of God, when it is sette before them. I will not holde him guiltles, which shall abuse my name in vaine. By God, who speaketh. I sware (you) that all the haires of the heades of them standyng vpon earth, which blaspheme God so wickedly and villanously, as I have heard. When one sweareth lightly by his faith, beholde God who is angred and fretted as often as thou hast not honoured him: thou shalt geue an accompt for such vnreuerence. Whosoeuer heare swearyng for a simple lesse of one persone himselfe, this is muche worse, if another blaspheme herein in the congregation and further danger, shall it will vpbraide openly despite God, as if he would arme our selues against him, and strike him with some deadly wounde. Moreouer, if after this one thinke not of the punishment which hangeth ouer, and is ready to fall vpon them which have so often despised the power of God, or heard him vnreuerently spoken of, neyther say that this proceedeth of some beastly drunkennesse, and that menne altogether without sence and vnderstanding: and that Sathan hath altogether blinded them: Alas yes, yet notwithstanding this thing is so common, as nothing more. If some maister shoulde say in his house, I will be obeied in all thinges: but loe, one thing which I desire aboue all to be done, and I will not suffer any one to faile herein, but I will put him out of my seruice, or I will correct and chastise him as hee deserueth: If some maister (I say) shoulde giue such a charge of some one thing, although in the rest a seruant would not be ouer diligent, yet in this would he haue some feare. Nowe behold God curseth them which transgresse and offende against his lawe in any article. Cursed be he which honoureth not his father and mother. Cursed be he that sheadeth. Cursed be he which committeth adulterie. Cursed be he which obserueth not all the thinges which are conteined in the lawe. But heere, by some specialtie, hee maketh a generall threate on them which shall abuse the name of God. By this he declareth that although he will that men obserue his lawe, in all pointes, and that our life bee ordered thereby, notwithstanding hee refer-

saue more then a Father and Sauiour to vs? If this remaine well imprinted in our memory, it is certaine we shall easily forget all others. But if we follow on still our wickednesse therein, that which is saide by the Prophet Zacharie, shall bee fulfilled vpon vs, that is to wit, this: They shall looke him whom they haue pearced: that is to say, him whom they haue wounded. For though men flatter one another, & make their othes but a laughing game and thinke that this shall easily be pardoned them, God cannot nor ought to be mocked, & he will in the end shew, that he ought not so to haue his Name sworne and warred against. Moreouer, we haue to note, that God would in this place by one special kind of abuse, shew briefly what reuerence we ought to beare generally to his name. It is true that in expresse words here is mention made of othes, but yet this doctrine ought to be further extended: namely, that when we think on God, or speake of him, we do it with all reuerence, that we be awakened, not onely to honor and praise him aboue all, but to haue a feeling of his inestimable glory, before which the Angelles tremble, that we which are poore and fraile creatures, as nothing more, may at least doe homage to the Soueraigne maiestie of our God, whensoeuer mention is made thereof. Behold one point which we ought well to obserue in this sentence. True it is, that this doctrine is easie of it selfe, but yet obscure vnto vs, because it is so euill practised. When we thinke of GOD, what vaine thoughtes come into our heads? Our nature verily is much enclined hereunto, as we are full fraughted and stuffed with fancies and lyes, and there is nothing but darkenesse in vs. But when men nourishe in them selues those euil and wicked fantasies, which they conceiue against the honour of GOD: this declareth that they haue conspired and made an agreement together with the Diuel. And yet how many are there which take care for this, when there shall arise in them any wicked fansie, or such thoughts & imaginations which in their conscience they know to be wicked, and against the glory of God, to represse and keepe them vnder? Who vse any forcing of themselues to resist them? Nay rather, men take pleasure in them, and bathe themselues with much delight in such imaginations. And when the minde, that is, the vnderstanding of men, is so defiled, the rest is easily corrupted. And that this is so, confesse it by our wordes which follow. For how speake we of God for the most part? What opinions haue we of him? It seemeth

Deut. 6. 13. Zachar. 12. 10.

1. Cor. 5. 6
Gala. 5. 9

euery man (I beseeche you) to take heede, that we be altogether vnleauened. For a little leauen, (as the holie Ghoste saieth) doeth sower the whole lumpe of dough. Seeing then, that the same is euer with wicked speaches, which defile and infect vs with euill vices, how much more that of other is the worst, when men speake of God in mockerie, when one will scorne and floute him, when one maketh a iest of him, not only after a ridiculous fonde and vaine, but villanous and reprochable? As not that one of purpose and wittilie maketh to violate the maiestie of God? And yet notwithstanding this is done, and commonly vsed, so that there is scarce any long discourse made, or great matter maintained, which hath not I knowe not what intermingled, whereby God shal be contemned and set at naught. Shew we not then hereby, that we neuer knewe aright what it is to worship him? Wel, we shall say euery day, Thy name be hallowed: but we be at the contrarie. So that there needeth any other sentence of condemnation light on our heades than that? When we come to the Churche, we will confesse with our mouthes, that we desire that the name of God be maintained in his due honour: we will say as much at the Table, and euery one when he riseth and lyeth him downe to sleepe. (I speake of them which are not altogether brutishe, for there are some which knowe not what is meaneth to make prayer vnto God.) But they which shall haue so much honestie as to pray vnto God, they shall well say with the mouth, Thy name be sanctified, but this is scarce gone from the tip of their tongue, and beholde a false othe in their mouth, and they will take the name of God hither and thither. And whether tendeth his wickednesse, but to the violating of the maiestie of God, and to the dispiting of him, as if we would giue him a blowe with a dagger, or spit in his face? And (as I haue saide) there needeth no other iudge to condemne vs in our false othes, than this protestation which we make when we desire of GOD that he will maintaine the holynesse of his name. And yet in the meane time, we seeke to deface it as much as lyeth in vs. Now it is meete that we shuld speake of the maiestie of GOD in all reuerence, especially, when we talke of his workes. As howe? when we speake of the time, whether he sendeth faire wether, or raine: Lo these are matters of the maiestie of GOD. If he sende vs contrarie seasons, for the welth of him left vs a Iudge, to

the end to make vs feele his wrath and indignation, that wee might enter into the examination of our sinnes, to bewaile them, and to be [illegible] repentance. Now, if in steede of humbling our selues before God, and hauing a displeasure with our selues for our offences, wee are wayward and ouerthwart, (as wee see that some men are wont despitefully to say. And must this season continue in this sorte, and thus long?) and haue not recourse to our God, beseeching him to pardon our faultes, this shall be to take the name of God in vayne. As much is to be said of all the rest. I bring this example onely to shew, that when wee are to speake of the workes of God, it behoueth that either we perceiue him to be a Father in his goodnes, or feele him to be a Iudge in his rigour and seueritie. Therefore when God shal doe thinges which shall not fall out to our mind, and which shall be contrary to our wishes and desires, let vs know that he graspeth and chastiseth vs, to the ende wee should enter into the acknowledging of our sinnes, to condemne them, and to be displeased with them. If the wee glorifie not God in this thing, we vnhallow his holy name. And agayne, when God on the contrary side draweth vs to himselfe in all gentlenes, as a louing and pitifull Father, this is to the end we be led vnto him, and that wee honour him so much the more. And if our vnthankfulnes is to be condemned for not honouring him in the first word which he shall haue spoken, what shall bee sayde when we shall bee vpbraided of all these thinges, that by all the wayes GOD shal haue sought to draw and allure vs, he might winne vs to himselfe by none? But contrariwise, wee shall haue shewed our selues contemners of his maiestie, and shall haue troden his workes vnder our feete, or shall haue cast downe the grosse as hedges, and repyne agaynst him. I pray you shal not this be an horrible condemnation, if we be condemned heereof? Now, although God hath imprinted some marke of his maiestie in all his workes, and that he ought to bee knowen of vs in raine, in faire weather, in heate, in colde, briefly, in all the order of nature, yet hath he especially imprinted his mark in his worde. True it is, that this is an intollerable and inexcusable vice, when wee reknowledge not God in the benefites which he hath bestowed on vs. We hold our life of him, that is, in him we liue, (as S. Paule speaketh) so that if wee haue not a remembrance of God in all this be not that this is already a wonderful vnthankfulnesse. But (as I haue alwaies said) aboue all would imprint his mark Act. 17. 28.

in his worde. Let vs behold the heauen and the earth, and we shall see God declared fully in them. For what is this worlde, but a liuely Image (as S. Paule speaketh) in the which God sheweth and declareth himselfe? For albeit hee bee inuisible in his essence, yet sheweth he himselfe by his workes, to the end wee should worship him. But when we come to the holy scripture, in it shal we see an image, wherin GOD openeth and declareth himselfe much more plainly and in more familiar wise vnto vs, than he doth eyther in the heauen, or in the earth: in such sort, that neither Sunne nor Mone, although they geue light vnto the worlde, doe so set forth the maiestie of God, as do the Law, the Prophets, & the Gospel. Now for all this, howe speake men of the scriptures? With what wicked boldnes and presumption? Do not men I pray you at this day geue themselues to lawlesse libertie, to speake of the word of God according to their owne fantasies? And when men enter into a dispute of the holy scriptures ouer the pot, in tauernes & alehouses, is there any question of humbling our selues vnder it, and that al knowing their owne rudenes and infirmitie, desire of God his holy spirit, to the ende, his secrets and mysteries be handled of vs as it behoueth? No, but these disputes are as in way of mockery to sport our selues. And by this a man may see, more than were to be wished, how few there be truely religious and godly in the worlde. We see some make themselues game with ỹ Scripture, drawing into Prouerbiall sentences to moue laughter, that they make no other account than to iest and play with it, as if it were but a nose of waxe, which one may fashion as he liketh, and turne any way it should seeme good vnto him. Others are in their wandring and flitting opinions, reasoning why this, and why that: And when we come to the high mysteries of God, if they mislike vs, wee could wish that al were put out and abolished. And this is all one, as if we would plucke God out of heauen. So then let vs learne, that aboue al, God commendeth vnto vs the honour and authority of his word, as if he did say, I wil that you receiue all that which is contained in the holy scripture, that is in my worde, with al humility & reuerence. I wil that you yeelde your selues tractable, although that which is there sayd, agree not with your sense and reason, and that you could wish I had spoken after your manner and fashion. I will you do me this honour, as to imprison all your senses, and submit your vnderstanding to my worde, and to say: Lord wee are thy disciples, we re-

Rom. 1. 20

ceiue

reine without gainsaying whatsoeuer it hath pleased thée to teache vs, knowing that it is for our profit & saluation. Without exception therfore, let all that which is comprised in the holy scripture, be receiued with reuerence, and whē any question is of the holy mysteries of God, let vs not giue iudgement according to our owne wit and vnderstanding. And albeit the thinges be not conuenient and agreable with our reason, let vs not withstanding be held backe in a short bridle, that God may alwaies haue his whole entire authoritie ouer vs, and his worde a full course and libertie. And when wée read the holie scriptures, when we come to the Sermons, let vs alwayes beare in minde to say, Behold our God declareth him selfe vnto vs: he sitteth as our Iudge, wée are not to make toyes and gambaldes of those thinges he shall speake. As we see, many will come to the Sermon: But what? They haue their hearts empoisoned against God and his worde, so that they can carie nothing thence which they peruert not with their wickednesse: yea, they wil be further enuenomed to spue forth their blasphemies at table or els wher, whē men shal not speak any thing to their lust and appetite. Loe how these men honor & sanctifie the name of God. Let vs learne then, that whether we reade the holie scripture, or heare it handled in a Sermon, to haue alwayes the name of God in reuerence, & to yelde vnto him such maiestie, that we tremble when one speaketh vnto vs hereof: And aboue all, when his worde is preached, as God speaketh by his Prophet Esaie. For let vs *Esai. 66.* know, that so we shall declare our selues, not onely by wordes, but also by our deedes, that we are his true faithfull ones, and he shal take and auowe vs for his people, and shall gather vs in the end into the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him that it will please him not to impute those wes haue alreadie committed, vnto vs: but that it will please him to reforme vs in such sort vnto himself, that we desire no other thing than to honour him, and to dedicate our selues vnto his seruice, to the end he may dwel amōg vs, and that our Lord Iesus Christ may reigne in vs both by his holy spirit & by his word: and so let vs say, Almightie God and heauenlie father, &c.

The 5. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

12 Keepe the Sabbaoth day to sanctifie it, as the Lorde thy God, hath commaunded thee.
13 Sixe dayes thou shalt labour, and shalt doe all thy worke:
14 But the seuenth day is the Sabbaoth of the Lorde thy God, thou shalt not doe any worke therein, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy manseruant, nor thy maid, nor thine oxe, nor thine asse, neither any of thy cattell, nor the stranger that is within thy gates, that thy manseruant & thy maide may rest as well as thou.

After that it hath beene spoken of the pure and sincere worship of God, of seruing him, and glorifying his name, without vaine talking of it, either in others or other things, but reuerently and to the honour of God, now hee is mention made of the seruice of God, according to that he hath required in his lawe, touching the order hee appointed for the exercise of the faithfull. As the Sabbaoth day, or day of rest was in part a figure, to declare that men could not rightly serue God but by mortifying all that should be of their owne nature, and afterwards by dedicating themselues wholy vnto him, as if they were wholy separated from the world. Secondly, the day of rest had this ceremonious vse, to cause the people to assemble together, to heare the lawe, to call on the name of God, to offer their sacrifices, and to vse all that which should concerne spirituall order and policie. Wee see then where in what sort mention is made of the Sabbaoth day. But this cannot be wel and sufficiently vnderstoode without some plainer and more distinct handling: namely, except both these parties should particularly be intreated. Wee haue therefore first to note, that the Sabbaoth day was a shadow vnder the law, vntil the comming of Christ, to signifie, that God will that men rest themselues from their owne workes. And this is that

which

which I haue saide in a worde, that we muste vnderstande our whole nature, if we will be conformable to our God. And that this is so, Paule hath also declared. Yea besides, we haue sufficient testimonie heereof in the newe testament. But it shall suffice to haue alledged him at this tyme, which speaketh more fully hereof: namely, to the Colossians: when he saieth, That we haue the substance and the body of those things which were shadowed vnder the lawe: which haue it (saith he) in Christ. And therefore it was expedient, that the auncient fathers shoulde bee exercised in this hope, as well by the Sabbath day, as by other ceremonies. But sithence the thing is nowe giuen vs, we ought not to stay our selues on these shadowes. Wherefore it is, that the lawe is so abolished, that we ought to taste the substance and truth thereof. As for the shadowes and figures, they are done away by the comming of Christ. If one demaund howe the ancient fathers knew of this sense and meaning? Moyses hath made declaration heereof, as it is sufficiently shewed in the booke of Exodus. For God, after he had published his lawe in the 20. Chap. he reuealeth it to Moyses, and declareth to what ende this serueth, saying, That he hath ordained the Sabbath day, as a signe, that the people of Israel should be sanctified vnto him. This is (saith hee) the matter of my sanctification, which I haue ratified among you. Now when the Scripture speaketh of our beeing sanctified vnto God, it is to separate vs from all that which is contrarie to his worship and seruice. But where shall one finde such puritie? We are in the worlde, and the lust we shall in the worlde there is nothing but pernicious filthinesse (as saith S. Iohn in his Canonical epistle.) Yea men need not goe forth of themselues to haue battel with God and his iustice. For all our senses and reason, and all our affections (as saith S. Paul to the Romanes) are enimies against God. When men lose the bridle to their thoughts and imaginations, to their desires and lustes, then make they open battel with God. And we are not ignorant of that which is declared in the first of Genesis, That all that which man can thinke and imagine, is nothing but euil continually: and all that which man forgeth in himselfe, erreth in his owne sight, is vnto wicked and corrupt before God. So then we see well, that we cannot be sanctified before our God: that is to say, we cannot serue him in holines and pureness, being not yet separated from that vncleanness, and those defilings, which are contrarie thereunto, & not hauing fully

1. Iohn. 2. 16.

Rom. 8. 7.

Gen. 6. 5.

abolished all that which is of our own nature. It behoued then ỹ this should be represented in a figure to the ancient fathers, for that Christ was not yet fully reuealed vnto thē. But at this day we haue in Iesus Christ the accomplishment & the performance of all thinges. In this wise S. Paul speaketh of ỹ old mā, vnderstāding by this word, al that which we haue of Adā, that it ought to dye, & bee cleane abolished: namely, not the nature of our body or of our soule, but ỹ malice which is within vs, & the blindnes which maketh vs erre, the lusts & euil desires which are altogether rebellious to the iustice of God. It behoueth that al this, in as much as it is drawn frō Adam, be beaten down, & cleane takē away. And how is this done? This is not by our own industrie & labor, but Iesus Christ dying for vs, and to wipe out our sinnes, that they might be no more imputed vnto vs, hath gotten vnto vs also this prerogatiue, that by the vertue & power of his holy spirit, we might renoince the world & our selues in such sort, that our carnal affectiōs no more reigne in vs. And albeit they be ful of rebellion, yet notwithstanding shall the Spirite of God beare rule ouer them, to represse them and to hold them backe as it were with a bryde. Therfore it is said, That we are raised with him: And S. Paule declareth the same also in the Chap. which I haue already recyted to the Colossians. Now this was not yet manifested vnder the lawe. It behoued therfore that the fathers which liued in that time, should haue some ayde heerein, as they had the sacrifices, which nourished them in the hope of the death of Christ, to the end they should know, that their sinnes were purged by the blood of this Mediator, So had they also the Sabbaoth day for a testimonie & witnes, that the grace was obtained vs to mortifie our thoughts & affectiōs, to the end that God might liue in vs by the vertue of his holy spirit. Now we haue some entrance to the vnderstanding of this which hath beene shortly touched: namely, that the Sabbaoth day was as a figure to represent this which in very deed hath bin accomplished at the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. And so let vs note that the Sabbaoth day extendeth it self to the whole seruice of God, to declare that men could not purely & sincerly honour him, but by renouncing of themselues, and by being separated from the defilements of the world, & of their own flesh. And for this cause the prophet Ezech. reproueth the Iewes that they kept not the Sabboth. For this is said vnto them as if they had in general broke ỹ whole law, & not without cause. For he which setteth at naught the Sabbaoth day, hath cast vnder foote all the seruice

Rom. 6. 6.

1. Cor. 15. 3.

Rom. 6. 4. 5.

Col. 2. 12.

Ezech. 20. 12. 16.

of

of God as much as in him is. And if the Sabbaoth day bee not obserued, al the rest shalbe worthy nothing, as is spoken to the Prophet Esay, That men must bereaue themselues of their own proper vertues, that they must humble themselues: other wise, that this is not the rest of the Lord, which is agreeable to him, or allowed of him. By this we perceiue, that it auayleth nothing to keep the ceremonie only. For albeit the Iewes had well obserued the ceremonie, albe it they should haue assembled themselues together on the Sabboth day without putting a finger to their houshold affaires, & yet in ỹ meane time should nourish in themselues their wicked thoughts & affections, & after put them in practise: this would haue beene but a meere mocking of God, an abusing of his name, a defacing & peruerting of the whole order he had instituted, as he also reproueth thē. For the principal point was to haue respect to the truth of the figure: namely, to the spiritual seruice of God. And yet notwithstanding it behoued also, that the Iewes should keep ỹ ceremony which was commanded them. For God held them in this bridle, as not content that they should haue only the substance of things, but also the shadowes & figures of them, vntil ỹ coming of Iesus Christ. Now hereby vnderstand that which S. Paul saith, That now we are not tied vnto this bondage of the ancient fathers, to obserue in this sort the Sabboth day. For we must doe this honor to our Lord Iesus Christ, that we content ourselues wt ỹ which he hath brought to vs in his own person, without reteyning any longer that which was exterior & ceremonious vnder ỹ law. Now then it is easie to gather how this obseruation perteineth vnto vs at this day. Touching the ceremony (as I haue said) it is past & done away. We must then come to the substance, that is, thatto the end we may serue God wel & sincerely, we learn to withdraw our selues from all our own wils, & all our euil thoughts & affections. And why? For otherwise when we wil serue God, we marre al. It behoueth therfore that al our own wisdom be laid aside, & that we heare God speak, not following our own wisdom & fantasies. Thus yee see the beginning & first steppe to the right obseruing of the Sabboth day, as wee ought: namely, not to trust to that which we think & imagine to be good. For we must rest. And how rest? Forsooth we must abide stil & quiet. Our thoughts must not stir to wander & deuise this & that. We must (I say) remain quiet in the obedience of our God. And whē we shall be pricked & stirred vp by our lusts, let vs call to minde ỹ these are enimies against God, and that all our affections are wicked and rebellious.

Esay. 56. 3 2, 6.

Rom. 8. 7.

We

We must then quietly rest in that behalfe, and yéld our selues ouer vnto God, to the end that he onely may worke in vs, that he may conduct and gouerne vs by his holy spirite. By this wee see that GOD hath omitted nothing, when he appointed the Sabboth day. For if it extend so farre as vnto his whole seruice, what is wanting vnto vs for a perfect doctrine of sanctimonie and holinesse? Seeing then wee haue the holy Ghost which vesenteth vnto vs all y which is requisite, there is not further question, but of walking holily in the obedience of our God. And how is this done? Verily, when with all reuerence and humilitie we receiue his holy worde, seeking to conforme our selues vnto his iustice. But because all that which is of our own, is contrary hereunto, we must begin at this end; namely, to renounce our selues. When this shalbe done, haue we not all that which is requisite for the seruice of God. But this is very hardly done, & therefore let vs take the more diligent heede as is spoken and stirre vp our selues, when we heare that GOD commaundeth vs to obserue the Sabboth day, knowing that this is not in sporting our selues, but that we ought herein to vse force with our selues, considering that for lit earnest we shall haue well profited, if we come to obserue this day of rest, that is to wit, by renouncing all that which is of our owne, and by dedicating our selues wholly vnto our God. And by so much the more ought we too bee inflamed to obserue spiritually this rest of the Lord, seeing we are franchised from this seruile subiection of the law, and that God hath geuen vnto vs a greater priuiledge, than vnto the auncient Fathers; in as much as he is contented that we be mortified in vile ydle man, to be reuiued by his holy Spirite, so that we are no more bound to the obseruing of that ceremony which was so streightly kept vnder the law. Therefore when GOD handleth vs so lovingly, this bindeth vs so much the more to haue respect vnto the principall, to the ende we may duely obserue it. And we may not alledge that the auncient fathers haue had the ceremony to stirre them vpp, and that this serued as a spurre to pricke them forward, for we haue much more than the outward & exteriour signe: for our Lorde Iesus Christ is appeared, that in him all this which hath beene figured vnder a shadow might be fulfilled. Wherefore we are not to desire these smaller things which haue been vnder the law. Now see then how that which hath beene to be done concerning the Sabboth day, is accomplished at this day touching the truth of the figure, whereof the

Col. 2. 17.

Fathers

fathers had a sight vnder a shadowe. And in deed we must note, that this which was commaunded of the Sabbaoth day, is common & belonging vnto vs, as well as vnto them. For let vs take the lawe of God as it is in it selfe, and we shall haue a perpetual rule of iustice. Seing it is most certaine, that vnder the ten commandements, God would giue a rule which should endure for euer. So let vs not thinke that this which Moses reciteth touching the Sabbaoth day, is superfluous, and not appertaining to vs. Not that the figure yet abydeth, but we haue the truth thereof. See to this purpose why the Apostle applyeth to the instruction of Christians, and of the new Church, this which is said of the Sabbaoth day. For he declareth that wee ought to conforme our selues vnto our God, and that this is our full & perfect felicitie. So, forasmuch as the chiefe happinesse of man consisteth in this, that he was created to the image of god, what ought we now if thence this image is defaced & blotted out by sinne, but to studie to renew and repaire it? See then how we ought to march on forwards to our perfection: namely, that in conforming our selues to our God, and to his will, we enquire and seeke after his workes, to the end to endeuour to do the like. Let vs know therefore that at this day, to the end we may the better serue God, our duetie is, to bestowe all the paines we are able, to tread vnder our owne thoughts and affections, that God may reigne and beare rule in vs, that he may guide & gouerne vs by his holy spirite. And so al hypocrites may well maske and disguise themselues, they may wel paint their doings, and shew faire countenances: yet nevertheless, as long as their wicked lustes shal be closed vp, and hid in their hearts, as long as they shal bee full of enuie, of rancors, of ambition, of cruelty, or of deceit, it is certaine they shal doe nothing else but violate the Sabbaoth day, or day of rest. And therefore we may conclude, that they peruert al the seruice of God, according to that we haue alreadie alledged out of Ezechiel: and as it is also spoken heereof in Ieremie. And marke wee why the ceremonie was so streight vnder the lawe. Thinke we that God euer take pleasure in the yolenesse of men? Certaine it is hee hath not. And yet he punished as grieuously him which brake the day of rest to labour therein, as if he had murdered a man. And why so? It seemeth that it is extreme cruelties, that for gathering of sticks on the Sabbaoth day a man must dye, as if hee did commit murder. Yet the Lorde condemneth him to death which gathered sticks in

Heb. 4. 10.

Num. 15. 32.

the Sabbaoth day. And why? Because that vnder this figure was ment inuyhended the whole seruice of God. And see why in Ieremie it
Ier.17.21. is said, that they haue carried burthens on the Sabbaoth day. And why? It seemeth that God stayeth himself ouermuch on a trifling and childish thing, but hee hath respect vnto this which was signified by the Sabbaoth day. And therefore when it was so neglected of the Iewes, this was as open sacrilege, whereby they did declare that the whole law was of small account amongst them. So then, to come to our selues, forasmuch as at this day we haue not this figure for purpose, and so streight, but that God hath giuen vs a greater libertie, obtained vnto vs by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, let vs learne with al diligence to bequeath our selues vnto him, and to knowe (as I haue alreadie touched) that how faire soeuer we shal haue trauelled in al the rest, it shall bee to small purpose, except our affections bee holye withdrawen, and that wee bestowe all our paynes to renounce and take leaue of our lusts and desires in such sorte, that GOD alone may rule and gouerne vs, and that wee may protest that we desire nothing else, but to rest and repose our selues on him. And see howe God proposeth himselfe for an example. For hee is not onely content to commande men to rest, but hee hath
Gen.2.2. also shewed them the way hereto. For after hee had created the worlde, and all therein contained, hee rested not that he was weary or needed any rest, but this was to leade vs to beholde his workes: and that staying our selues thereon, wee might bee fashioned vnto him. Wil wee then obserue the spiritual rest? Euen as it is saide, that hee rested from all his workes. So must wee also bee quiet and still, leauing to doe that shall seeme good vnto vs, and which our owne nature desireth.

If this example of God stirre vs not vp, wee declare sufficiently, that we seeke not to obay him, and by this meanes we searche not after, in any respect, the true felicitie, but desire willingly to abide in our pouertie and wretchednesse. The soueraigne goodnes and chiefe felicitie of men (as I haue saide) is this, that they cleaue vnto their God. Behold, our Lord calleth vs to himself, shewing that wee can haue no true and holy conjunction with him, but by resting our selues from our owne workes. So then, if wee bee stil sitting in our seates, if we labour hande and foote to put that in practise which

which shall seeme good vnto vs, it is certeine, this is as if we would breake the bondes which linke GOD and vs together, and withdrawe our selues from him as muche as in vs lieth. And by this may not a man see, that wee desire nothing els, but to bee set fourth as a pray vnto Sathan, who driueth vs on headlong, and maketh vs to wander, forasmuche as wee remaine no longer vnder the gard and protection of our GOD? But what? Fewe there are, which consider of this aright. Wee see the libertie euerie man yeeldeth vnto him selfe. When one warneth a man, that hee ought not to walke after his owne heartes lust: What? I knowe (will he saie) howe I ought to rule my selfe. Verilie, a man knoweth not howe to despite GOD in more open manner, than by suche a rebellion. This is as muche, as if wee would saie, that wee will not that GOD haue any superioritie ouer vs. It is true, men will not openly protest this, but the matter is so. For (as I haue alreadie saide) there is no true worship, except wee henee take our beginning, to withdraw our selues from our owne lustes and affections.

Now then, when men will bee so wise in their owne conceite, when they put suche confidence in their owne witte and reason, when they giue them selues all libertie to doe whatsoeuer seemeth them good, when they followe their owne affections and fansies, when they will take no paine to represse them, nay, are grieued when any would daunte and tame them, it is a sure signe, they neuer knewe wherein consisteth the true worship of GOD, neuer vnderstoode the chiefe and principall pointe of the lawe. And so let vs note well, that when GOD alledgeth his owne example, it is to allure vs with all mildenesse and gentlenesse to the obseruation of the lawe, and keeping of this spirituall rest. And withall let vs note (as I haue alreadie touched) that wee are wretched and miserable, when we are separated and remoued from him. And beholde the bonde of our coniunction: namely, that drawing neere to his trueth and religion, wee suffer our selues to bee guided and gouerned by him. Nowe a man may demaunde, for what cause the Iewes were commaunded to rest onely the seuenth day: for wee ought not for one day in the weeke renounce our lustes and affections, but wee must continue in that minde

all the time of our life. Briefly, the rest which the Lord commandeth is perpetuall, and without any ceasing or intermission. How then is it, that he hath chosen one onely day in the weeke? It was to the ende, that when we shall haue applied all our studies to abandon our false opinions, our wicked concupiscences, all that which proceedeth from our peruerse and corrupt nature, that yet wee can not come fully to this, vntill we be wholy ridde of our flesh. In deed, the faithfull ought their whole life time to obserue the Sabbaoth day, they ought to giue ouer their owne desires, forsake their owne workes, seeke to offer vp themselues wholy to God in all humilitie, to order themselues after his will, they ought to continue in his obedience: (I say) wee must doe so: or otherwise, all the seruice we shal do vnto God, is but feignednesse & hypocrisie: and as for him, hee will disallow and reiect it. Neuertheleſſe, we cannot acquite our selues wholy in this, to renounce our affections in suche sort, that there be no blame foounde in vs. Saint Paule glorifieth in this, that the world was crucified vnto him, and he vnto the worlde. Yet in the meane time, he ceaseth not to say, that the flesh fighteth with the spirite, and haue no agreement together: yea, he confesseth also in the seuenth to the Romanes, that he alwayes perceiued in him selfe this strife, that he did not the good which he would: that is to say, he accomplished it not with so feruent a desire, neither was he so resolued to walke according vnto God, but that he had alwayes many stoppes and hinderaunces to stay him in such sort, that hee seemed to halte, in steede of strong and vpright running. Sithence then it is so, let vs note, that not without cause God ordeined the seuenth day for the Sabbaoth day, signifying thereby, that wee can not neither in one day, neither in one moneth, come to this perfection of sanctimonie and holinesse which hee requireth of vs. And why? Because that when we shall haue manfully fought against the lustes and affections of our flesh, against our euil thoughts and desires: yet shal there bee alwayes a residue and remnant in vs, vntill we be fullie ioyned and associated with our God, and that he hath gathered vs into his heauenly kingdome. Vntill that time, there shall bee alwayes some temptations in vs, there shall bee alwayes some troubles, some vnquietnesse, wee shall alwayes feele (I meane those which seeke to please God) that we are yet subiect to many temptations, and that there remaine in our nature many prickes, by the whiche wee are stirred vp and prouoked to this and to that.

Gal.6,14.

Rom.7. 19.

And

And are not these so many lets to hinder the spiritual rest? If a man do repose him selfe and rest so in God as he should doe: he should conceiue nothing in his fantasie which might turne him from the right way, he should haue in him no euill affections or desires. All these thinges should be farre from him. Therefore, when we conceiue so many wicked fantasies, loe, Sathan commeth to assaile and to shake vs with so many disquietinges. When we shall haue thought to doo wel, there arise some thinges in our minde which tickle and flatter vs: and so albeit wee hate that which is euill, yet by such temptations we are prouoked to pursue after, and to follow it. And by this a man may see, that it is no easie thing to be without all wicked concupiscences, and to cast them off, so that they beare no rule at all in vs. So then let vs continually follow this studie and desire of celebrating the spirituall rest of God, because we shall not come to the perfection thereof, vntill the ende of our life. Nowe hereby we are admonished of two thinges: The one is, that we be in displeasure with our selues, & mourne perpetually for our sinnes. And although it seemeth that wee haue bestowed great paine to make our selues obedient vnto GOD: yet let vs knowe that we are alwayes but in the way, and that we lacke much of accomplishing that which God commaundeth, and requireth of vs in the lawe. And this one thing may occasion vs to humble our selues, seeing that GOD shall alwayes finde in vs ouermuch to condemne vs for his seruice, and that this spirituall rest of ours, commeth not neere by many degrees to that which he commaundeth. On the other side, hauing this occasion of humbling & bewailing our selues in true repentance, let vs knowe this for the seconde point, that wee ought so much the more to be moued and pricked forwarde to make our further profite, when we may say, Nowe now. It is true that God hath giuen me the grace that I desire to serue him: But howe doe I behaue my selfe herein? Alas, I am yet farre wide, & farre off from it. For when we perceiue this imperfection in vs, ought we not to enforce our selues forwarde in the seruice of God? So detesting the euill and wickednesse which is in vs, let vs be pricked so muche the more forwarde alwayes to profite in this rest, and let euerie one call him selfe dailie to account for his going forwarde herein. Yee see then howe GOD, hauing giuen vs occasion to humble our selues vnder his hande, all the time of our life, sheweth vs that wee ought to be enflamed hereby to re-

rest the vices which are in vs, and to mortifie more and more the lustes and desires of our flesh. Therefore let vs knowe, that it is not sufficient, that our olde man be in part crucified, except we be wholy buried with Iesus Christ (as Saint Paule speaketh in this seuenth of the Romanes, which we haue alreadie alleaged.) We se then what we haue to note touching the seuenth day, of which it is here spoken.

Rom. 7. 4

It remaineth now, that we speake of the second point, wherin we haue before in a worde saide, that the Sabbaoth day was a ciuil order to exercise the faithfull in the seruice of God. For this day was appointed to assemble them together to heare the doctrine of the lawe preached, to receiue the sacramentes, to call on the name of God. And touching these pointes, it is common to vs with the auncient people of the Iewes. For although the figure is ceased, (I meane that whereof Saint Paule speaketh in the Epistle to the Colossians) yet notwithstanding, this policie appertaineth to ciuill order, as doeth all, and hath his vse. And this policie, what is it? It is to assemble our selues together in the name of God. True it is, this ought to be done euery day, but for because of our infirmitie, or rather slouthfulnesse, it was expedient that one day should be chosen out. If we were so feruent in the loue of God as we should be, it should not nede to ordeine one onely day in the weeke, but all would both euening and morning assemble them selues together, to the ende we might be edified more and more in the worde of God. And in deede this exercise were more than needfull for vs, considering that we are all so enclined vnto euill, that we nede not any thing to leade vs on further in wickednesse, and to lose the bridle more lose vnto vs. It is needefull then that we assemble our selues together on euerie day in the name of GOD. But what? We se that with much adoe men will assemble them selues together on the Sunday, and that many are to be holden to this order by force and violence. Hauing then suche an infirmitie in vs, let vs knowe that this order was not prescribed onely vnto the Iewes, of obseruing one certeine day, in the which they should come together: but to vs also as common with them. But yet herewithall we haue to note, that this is not all: and that this were a verie bare and naked thing, that our handes onely, and our feete should rest, and that nothing els should be done. What must we then doe? We

ought

ought to apply this rest to a more high and excellent thing: we ought to cease from those workes which might hinder the workes of GOD: not vs from calling on his name, stay vs from exercising of our selues in his holy worde. If wee employe the Sunday to make good cheere, to sporte our selues, to goe to games and pastymes, shall GOD in this bee honoured? Is not this a mockerie? Is not this an vnhalloweing of his name? When our shoppe windowes are shutte in on the Sunday, when wee trauell not after the common order and fashion of men, this is to the ende wee shoulde haue more libertie and leasure to attende on that which GOD commaundeth, that is to witte, to bee taught by his worde, to assemble our selues together, to make confession of our fayth, to call on his name, to exercyse our selues in the vse of the sacramentes. Loe then to what purpose this policie ought to serue.

But nowe let vs consider, whether they which call themselues Christians, acquite themselues in this point, as were requisite. A great parte of men thinke they haue the Sunday the better to attende on their worldly affaires, and they reserue to themselues this day, as if they had no other to gather riches for the whole yeare to come. Now if the bell shall ring to a Sermon, they thinke they haue an other thing to doe, but to thinke on their businesse, and to make their account of this, and of that. Others glutte themselues by eating, and are shut vp in their houses, because they dare not shewe a manifest contempt of their duetie in the open streetes. So that the Sunday is to them but a retreate, to withdraw them selues from the Church and Congregation of GOD. Yet this our may se, what affection wee haue towarde all Christianitie, and the seruice of GOD: seeing that by this which was giuen vs for an ayde and helpe to draw neere vnto GOD, we take occasion to withdraw our selues so much the further from him. And whither wander wee? Goe wee not so farre, as to recule and flee backe wholy from him? Is not this a diuelishe wickednesse of men? And yet this is so common, as it is pitie to beholde. And would to God we stode in nede to search for examples herein further off: and that they were more rare to bee founde. But see we howe all is prophaned and violated, that the most parte are nothing

carefull for the right vsage of this day, which was ordained to the end that we shoulde be retyred from al worldly cares, and drawen backe from all other busines, to yelde vp our selues wholy vnto God.

Moreouer, let vs know that the Sunday is not ordained for vs only to come to the Sermon, but to the end we employ the rest of the time to laude and praise God. Note we this. For although hee nourisheth vs euery day: yet notwithstanding, wee meditate not sufficiently of the benefites he bestoweth on vs, to magnifie him in them. True it is, that this should be but a poore thing, if we should consider of the benefites of God but on the Sunday. But on the other dayes, because we are occupied ouermuch about our worldly affaires, wee are not so giuen to God as in that day, which is altogether dedicated vnto him. The Sunday therefore ought to serue vs for a tower, to make vs mount on high to view the workes of God from a far; whē we are not hindered nor occupied with any thing, but that wee may apply al our senses, & our whole vnderstanding to acknowledge the gratious giftes and benefites which he hath bestowed on vs. And when we shal haue passed this on the Sunday: namely, shall haue duely considered of the workes of God, it is certaine, that al the rest of our time, we shal be giuen hereunto, and that this meditation shal so fashion and polish vs, that the Monday, and al the rest of the weeke, we shal be led to thanke our God, when so before hande wee shal haue premeditated on his workes, to make our profite therein. But when the Sunday is spent not only in games and pastimes full of vanitie, but in thinges which are altogither contrarie vnto God, that men thinke they haue not celebrated the Sunday, except God therein be by many and sundrie wayes offended: When men (I say) vnhallowe in such sort this holy day, which God hath instituted to leade vs vnto himselfe, is it any meruel if wee become brutishe and beastly in our doings all the rest of the weeke? What is to be done then? Let vs all knowe, that this is not sufficient, that wee come to the Sermon on the Sunday, to receiue some good doctrine, and to cal vppon the name of GOD: but wee muste digest those thinges wee heare and receiue, and apply al our senses to the better vnderstanding of those benefites which God bestoweth on vs, and that by this meane wee bee so formed and fashioned to this thing, that the Monday, and all the rest of the weeke beside, cost vs

nothing,

nothing, to aduise and to come to our God, and that wee meete but to call to minde, that which we shall haue learned before at good leasure; when our mindes be as it were vnwrapped from all these thinges, which hinder vs to recount the workes of God. And this wee haue to note touching the order we are to obserue at this day, which is not in keeping the ceremonie so streightlie as it was obserued vnder the lawe. For we haue no longer this figure. But this restday is to assemble vs together, to the ende that, according to our infirmitie, we be better exercised to applie our selues to the seruice of God, and to haue this day wholie consecrated vnto him, to the ende we be drawne altogether from the worlde, that this may serue vs the better, for the rest of our time, as we haue saide. And withal we muste note, that this is not enough, that euerie one in particular and alone thinke on God, and call to minde his workes on the Sunday: but we muste meete together one certeine day to make publike confession of our faith. It is true, that this ought to be done euery day (as we haue said) but because of the rawnesse and sloth of men, it is behouefull to haue one speciall day, which may wholie be dedicated and appointed to this vse. I confesse withal that we are not bound to the seuenth day (as indeed we obserue not it day which was commanded the Iewes, for this was the Saturday) but to shew the libertie of Christians, the day hath bene chaunged to the Sunday, forasmuche as Iesus Christ in his resurrection hath deliuered vs from the bondage of the lawe, & hath cancelled the bond thereof. This was the cause, why this chaunge hath bene made in the day. But yet we ought to obserue this order of hauing some day in the weeke, be it one, or be it two, for this is left in the choice and libertie of Christians. But that the whole people may be assembled, it is conuenient that one certeine day be ordained, to receiue the Sacramentes together in common, to haue the inuocation of the name of God, and to shewe an vnitie and concord in faith and religion. It sufficeth not then, that euerie one withdraw him selfe into his owne house, either to reade the holie scripture, or to pray vnto God, but it behoueth we come into the companie of the faithfull, and there declare the concorde and agreement we haue with the whole bodie of the Churche, and celebrate in suche sorte this order, as the Lorde hath commanded. But what? We may be bere the vnhallowing of the seruice of God. For, as I haue alreadie touched, are there not

many whych will shewe themselues herein displeasaunt vnto God, and that will be exempted from the commun lawe and order. Wherof it is, that they will happilie come but vi. times in the yeare to the sermon. But what to doe? Euen to make a mockerie of God, and of all his doctrine. These are indeed in the number of those hogges, which came to defile the temple of God, and deserued rather to be in stables: better it were they puld them selues in their stinking dennes: to speake bluntly, it were better that suche knaues were altogether cut off from the Churche of God, than to shewe themselues in the companie of the faithful. But yet how many times come they among them? The bel shall ring long enough, before a man may espie them in any place. So then we ought with more diligence to take heede to our selues, and quicken vp our selues to make such a confession of our faith, that God may be honored with one common accord in ministring vs. Moreouer, wee must abolish all superstitions. For wee se how among Papists men thinke to serue God by slouth and idlenes. This is not the manner, after which we ought to celebrate the Sabbaoth day: but to applie it to his right and lawfull vse, wee must knowe as we haue alreadie said, that our Lord requireth nothing els, but that this day be employed to heare his worde, to make our prayers in common, to make confession of our faith, and to vse the Sacraments. Wee wherefore see how we are called. And yet see to how all holy things are corrupted & brought to bitter confusion in Popedome: for as they intended alwayes to pollute them, so also they thought they ought to serue them in all idlenesse. Now seeing the worde is to be restored, we ought so much the better to note this declaration of the Sabbaoth day, as is here touched by Moses. And without let vs knowe to what end our Lorde hath commaunded the auncient people to kepe the day in the same to rest them selues. And at this day, vnder standing howe this our bare ceremonie is fulfilled by the comming of Christ, let vs giue our selues al the spirituall rest, that is, to dedicate our selues wholie vnto God, renouncing our owne desires and affections: and further let vs retein the exterior policie, as farre as it apperteineth vnto vs, namelie, to cease from our earthlie affaires, and all worldly busines, to attend the better on the meditation of the worde of God, that we may be exercised to knowe the benefites he bestoweth on vs, and about all, that we may bestow all our paines in acknow-

knowleging his gratious fauour, which he offereth dayly in his Gospel, to be confirmed and eſtabliſhed more and more therein, and when we ſhal haue employed the Sunday to praiſe and magnifie the name of God, and to meditate on his workes, let vs ſhewal the reſt of the worke that we haue profited herein.

Now let vs kneele our ſelues downe before the face of our god God, with acknowleging of our faultes, praying that it will pleaſe him to make vs feele them better than we haue done. And becauſe we can not in any reſpect ſerue him, vntill this wickednes and perverſnes which is in vs be aboliſhed: and becauſe he hath ſhewen that we ſhal not ceaſe to make warre againſt his iuſtice, as long as we ſhall leaue the bridle to our wicked thoughtes and concupiſcences, pray we, that it will pleaſe this good God, by the power of his holy ſpirit to giue vs this grace, to be fully conformed vnto him, which is heauenly miſen for vs, to the end he might mortifie and quicken vs, that we may beare the markes of our Lord Ieſus, euen in renouncing our ſelues, and vowching but to liue to his will, that we deſire nothing but to be conformed to his iuſtice, to the end his glory may be accompliſhed in vs, and that we nothing hinder vs in his work by our vnthankfulneſſe: Wherein it will pleaſe him to grant

the earth.

The 6. Sermon.

Deut. Chap.

13 Sixe dayes thou shalt labour, and shalt doe all thy woorke:

and stay our selues on this obseruation of the Lawe, but be content that our old man be crucified by the vertue of the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, to the ende wee may bee renewed in our mindes onely to serue our God. Withall wee noted, that wee stande in neede of some order and policie amongst vs, and therefore it behoued that some certaine day shoulde bee appointed to assemble vs together, to bee confirmed in the doctrine of God, and to make our profite therein euery day, euen all the time of our life, that wee bee also exercised to call vpon his name, to praise his goodnesse, and that the rest of [illegible] at all times of [illegible] the more glorified in them. And now haue we to note this which followeth in the text of

Moses.

Holes, Sixe dayes thou shalt labour, (saith the Lorde.) This ought not to be understood, as if God commanded vs hereby, precisely to labour, Howbeit, it is true, that we are borne to this, and we know that God meaneth not we should be idle as long as we liue in this world. For he hath giuen men handes and feete, force and strength, to this purpose. Also before sinne entred, it is saide that Adam was placed in the garden of Eden, to dresse it, and keepe it. Albeit the labour and trauell which men are now enioyned, is a chastisement for sinne. For it is thus denounced them, In the sweate of thy face, thou shalt eate thy bread. This is a curse and malediction laide on mankinde. For we are not worthy to enioy the condition which was giuen to our father Adam, that he might liue at pleasure without trouble, hauing nothing to suffer himself. But yet, before that sinne entred into the world, and that we were in this so frendemente of God to this painful and wearisome trauel, it was requisite, that men should exercise themselues with some labour. And why? Because this is contrarie to our nature, that we should be as logges and blockes vnprofitable. This therefore is very certaine, that we ought to apply our selues to some labour all the time of our life. But yet there is this place it is straightly commanded, that we should sixe dayes. For although there were other solemnities vnder the Lawe, besides the rest of the Sabboth. There were feastes, which might happen in the middest of the worke: but because the number of those festiuals being small, were but seldome in the yeare, there remained more of them, but one in of the Sabbaoth. Therefore, when it is saide, Thou shalt labour sixe dayes, our Lord should thereby signifie vnto vs, that we ought not to complaine of yelding vnto him one certain day, when he leaueth vnto vs sixe for one. As if he did say, What the rest and charge but great vnto you to chuse one day which may be wholy giuen to my seruice, that you do no other thing in it, but reade and exercise your selues in my lawe, and heare my doctrine which shalbe preached vnto you, & way to come to the Temple, to the end you may be there confirmed by the sacrifices which are there made, a day to call vpon my name, to declare and protest that you are of the number and company of my people. Ought this to be grieuous and burthensome vnto you: seeing you haue sixe dayes free, to traffike, and to doe your businesse in? Hath such gentlenesse towardes you, that I demaund but one day holy vnto me, is not this an ouer great vnthankfulnes on your part, if

you complaine of this time, as being still occupied, and if you be so couetous and niggardly wretches, as not to spare vnto me one seuenth part of the time, I haue giuen you your whole life, whereinsoeuer the Sunne shineth vpon you, you ought to acknowledge my goodnesse, and how that I am a liberal Father towards you, for this benefite which I make to shine vnto you to giue you a meane to go and worke by, to the end that euery one may do his businesse. Answer me all this, why is it that I shall not haue one day among seuen, in which euery one should withdraw himselfe from his labour and trauell, that you be not wrapped in the cares of the world, and so [illegible] to thinke vpon me? Now we see, that this [illegible] longeth vnto mans nature is not placed as a commaundement, [illegible] permission, which God giueth, and that to reproch the [illegible] reckelesse men, if they obserue not the Sabbaoth day, and [illegible] such sorte, as we haue spoken therof. And here hence we haue to gather a good and profitable admonition: namely, that when [illegible] slouthe to obay God, wee ought to consider of the benefites [illegible] lieth vpon vs. For this ought to make vs redy with [illegible] ste in the practising of those things, which God commaundeth, [illegible] when we shal well consider that he hateth vs not rigorously, [illegible] ther presseth vs ouermuch. For our God might vse a [illegible] bridle if it pleased him, he might force vs to things so hard, that [illegible] seeme vnto vs no way to set vs forwards therin: but he dissembleth of vs, and conducteth vs as a father would doe his children. Seeing it is so, that he in such sorte heareth with vs, ought not we to be sorte days so much the more to doe this which he commaundeth vs? So then, as often as the commandements of God are hard, or seeme so vnto vs, let vs know that he presseth vs not by many degrees, so much as he might. For we should be tormented out of measure, if the Lord would vse the rigour of extremitie. Know we therfore, that he heareth with vs, and that he vseth here towards vs a more than fatherly gentlenesse. True it is, that the lawe of God is in it selfe impossible vnto vs, not onely to obserue it in most perfect manner: but when a man by his natural vertue and strength will endeuour to acquite himselfe towardes God, hee shall not bee able to moue one finger, yea to haue one good thought to know howe he ought to beginne: yea, so farre are we from being meete and able to obay God, and to put in practise, that which is contained in his lawe, that

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all our thoughtes and affections are so manie enmities against GOD. If men, by their owne power, could accomplish the lawe, it should have bene saide vnto them, Trauell yee. But contrarie wise, it is saide vnto them, Rest yee, to the ende that GOD may worke. So then the lawe may well be impossible touching vs, but yet it is possible for GOD to imprinte it in our hearts, and to gouerne vs by his holie spirite, in suche wise, that this yoke shall bee sweete and sweete vnto vs, and that it shall haue no harmefull in it to grieue and trouble vs. So then, when men shal haue well considered of this thing, they shal be conuinced that God beareth with them as a father, whiche sheweth himselfe pitifull towardes his children. And therefore let vs take diligente heede that we be not vngratefull, but be prouoked and allured to feare our GOD the more, seeing he commaundeth vs not those thinges, whiche might seeme ouer bitter and painefull vnto vs, but hath a due regarde to our power and abilitie. Thus yee see what wee haue to note out of this place, where our Lorde declareth that he leaueth vnto men their couenaunt to serue him (as I was yesterday touched) that wee ought so to practise, as we ought to assemble our selues together to call vpon GOD, that we ought to mount vp to the heauenlie life, leauing all our worldlie affaires. But when GOD seeth that we are enuironed and inclosed with our flesh, that we creepe and trade on the grounde, and that infirmities stil beare vs in such sort, that we can not liue an Angelicall life, GOD therefore seeing he hath mercie and tenderlie to beare pitie, that we can not accomplish the whole in this whiche were our office and duetie to doe, that we call to him and he weth not the extremitie of his rigour, but saith that he is content if wee be prate one day vnto him, as to this only time he sayth for all the rest of the weke. And why so? For he knoweth (saith he) that we are but earth, he remembreth that we are euer ful of vice and frailtie. Therefore, where he beareth with vs after this maner, and leaueth vnto vs our frailties and infirmities, to auoide vnto vs all pride, which is so insensible a vice that, if we be not inclined to yelde our selues wholie vnto him, it soloweth vs in all our actes, that neither our meate, nor our drinke, nor our sleepe, nor our labour, nor the Sabboth day, nor the Feastes, shall

Rom. 8. 7.

which is within our gates. Touching the carnall, one might thinke it straunge, that God hath compelled them vnder the obseruation of this rest, seeing it is so high & heauenly a mysterie, as it was yesterday interpreted. And doeth such geare appertaine to oxen and to asses? Godfathers, I haue giuen you the Sabbaoth day to be a signe that I sanctifie you, and that I am your God, which reigneth in the middest of you. This is not belonging as touching to all mortall men: For God graunteth not this grace to Painims and vnfaithfull ones, to sanctifie them: he speaketh onely to the people which he chose for his inheritaunce, & which he adopted. Now, when the Sabbaoth day is a signe that God hath separated the faithfull of his Churche from the rest of the world, why is this extended to oxen and to asses? But note wel, that this is not done for the bruite beastes sakes, but to the end that men should haue a monument before their eyes, to be the touched therewith. This commaundement therefore is not applied to the beastes, which haue neither vnderstanding nor reason, but this is directed vnto men, which ought to make their profite of it. Note how that the sacrifices were made of bruite beastes, and so what furniture there was, what vessels of gold and siluer, and other like things: and when all these were hallowed, as it to be vnderstood that God put his spirite into these corruptible metalles, and into things which had no sense and feeling at all: but all this is belonging to the vse of men: as all creatures are made for our vse and behoofe. Thus God not only manifestly sets before vs things appertaining to this present fraile, and brittle life, but he giueth them vnto vs as tokens of his grace, to be meanes & aydes to mount vs vp on high to heauen. Therefore when God would that the men & the asses should rest them selues this seuenth day, this is not that he maketh them partakers of this spirituall rest, whereof we haue alreadie entreated, but this was to the end the Iewes seeing their Rables cleaue on, should be put in mind to say: Yelo now God setteth here before our eyes, this light and sacrament visible euen in the bruite beastes, and this is to the end that we on our part should be the better kept & holden in his seruice: that we should know that this were to breake the whole lawe, if we haue not regard vnto this which is the chiefe and principall pointe of all our life, namely: that we learne to renounce our selues, and to follow not our owne lustes reason, as we be prone: but that we suffer our God to rule and gouerne vs, and that we be as

dead

Exo. 20. 13. & 17.

dead creatures, that hee may liue in vs, and not followe our owne fwinge, which is altogether corrupted. Thus it behoued the Iewes deepely to weigh, euen in the brute beastes, this visible signe, which was giuen to the ende this might restraine them so muche the more, and that they shoulde bee admonished by this meane, to obserue the Sabbaoth day, with all reuerence. Withall we see, how in all times God handleth men according to their hardnesse, and that hee hath prouided them of meete and conuenient remedies, forasmuche as they are not inclined of them selues, before he draweth them in this manner. And this is not only for the Iewes, but for vs. Let vs therfore acknowledge the great goodnesse and mercie of our God, which forgetteth not, nor omitteth any thing of all that which might remedie our vices. And withall let vs acknowledge ỳ peruersenesse which is in vs, that wee flatter not our selues, nor giue the bridle to our affections, sithence we haue neede to bee constreined, and that God giue vs many prickes with the spurre, as to dull and restie iades. And when God pricketh and spurreth vs in such sort, know we that it is not without good cause, but that he doth it, because we are so croked and peruerse to be ruled, because wee are so frotward and rebellious. Let vs then beginne to displease our selues in all our lustes and affections, and learne to imprison our selues so faere, that nothing hinder vs to follow the way which God would lead vs in. And although our nature alwayes resist, yet let vs enforce our selues to walke after his will, vntill wee be fully ruled and ordered by our God. Loe, what we haue to beare in minde vpon this place: besides that which shalbe by and by touched of man seruantes, and maide seruantes: namely, that God putteth the Iewes in remembrance that they were seruantes in the lande of Egypt, and therefore that they ought with all gentlenesse, to entreate them, which are vnder their rule & authoritie. For he saith, Thy man seruant, & thy maide, shal rest them selues. And why? For thou wast sometime in bondage: the time hath bin thou couldest wel haue wished that one had giuen thee some rest and release from thy labours. Thou oughtest then to vse such gentlenes towardes them, which are vnder thy hande. But here it might seeme, that God hath ordeined the Sabbaoth day, not for a spirituall order, (as it hath bene aboue said) but that it might serue as a meane vnto charitie. For he saith, If thou wert in bondage, wouldest thou not that one shoulde giue thee some release

Wouldest thou alwayes bée oppressed with labour and trauelle? Surely by thy good will thou wouldest not. It behoueth then that thou beare also with others. Now this is not for the seruice of God, but rather instituted for common charitie, which ought to bée extended towarde our neighbours, howe euer in degrée they be vnderlinges vnto vs. But forasmuche as this commaundement is conteined in the first table of the laive, it is certeine that this which is heere touched, is but as accessarie. I say the first table of the laive, for it is not without cause that God hath so diuided his laive, which hée wrote in two stones. Might he not haue wrote them in one stone, if he had would? Why then hath he made of them two seueral partes? This is not without great reason. For in the laive of God there are two principall articles. The one concerneth our dutie towardes him: the other our dutie we owe to our neighbours, which liue and are conuersant with vs. As our whole life, if we conferer wel, ought hereunto to be referred. That is, that first in knowing we haue a God, to whom we are to liue, we walke in obedience: seeing wée holde our life of him, wée doe him homage and reuerence therefore: seeing he hath created vs vnto a farre better hope, and hath adopted vs for his children, wée glorifie him for so great mercie and goodnesse: seeing he hath redeemed vs by the blood of his sonne, wee become his, endeuoring to withdraw our selues from the pestilences of the worlde, to be vnto him liuely and vnspotted sacrifices, we call on him, hauing our recourse vnto him alone, we render him thanks for all his benefites bestowed vppon vs. Wée sée then the first poincte of our life consisteth in the honour wée ought to giue to our GOD. Againe, seeing it pleaseth him further to proue our obedience, by liuing with men in al vprightnesse, none shal be giuen to his priuate profite, but that we seeke to serue to the commoditie one of an other, that there be mutuall honestie betweene vs: so as we abstaine not onely from fraude, violence, and crueltie, but that our life be sober and modest, that wée be not dissolute, wicked, and brutish in our liuing. And this is the seconde poincte of our life. Nowe seeing it is so, that this commaundement of the Sabbaoth day is conteined in the first table: it followeth that it appertaineth to the spirituall seruice of GOD, and that here is no question to bée made of the charitie wée owe vnto our neighbours. And why then is this matter here treated of? It is almuche as if our Lorde

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did say, This day of rest, of some superabundance and ouerplus, shal serue you to this, that your men seruants, and your maides, haue a release with you from their labours. Not that this was the chiefe & principal end whereunto God tended. For this was not his principal meaning, that there should be one day in the weeke, in the which a man should cease from his labours, to the end he might breath for that day, & not toile so continually, as to faint for wearinesse. This was not the cause which moued God to ordaine the Sabbaoth day, or day of rest: but it was to this end, that the faithful should knowe they ought to liue so holily, as to rest from al their affections and desires, that God might wholy worke in them. For the rest, it serueth as a benefite of supererogation, as we say. Behold our Lorde sayth, Consider yee that sith you haue this warrant among you, that I sanctifie you, that you seeke to giue vp your selues wholy vnto mee: Yet, loe one thing which shal serue you further, and this is for your profite: namely, that your familie shal not toile, & ouerworke themselues continually. For there must bee some rest for your men seruants, and your maides, and your cattel: you shal haue then this as of superabundance. Nowe therefore wee see why heere is expresse mention made, that the Iewes were seruants in Egypt, and that it behoueth they haue some regard of them which are held as captiues and bondemen vnder their handes. For Moyses speaking of men seruantes and maydes, vnderstandeth it not after the common order and fashion among vs. For with them, the seruantes were slaues and bondmen, they burthened them, and holde them vnder, as the oxen and the asses, they had so vile and barbarous a condition, as was pitie to beholde. God then sheweth that the people of the Iewes obseruing the rest, shall receiue profit and commoditie by their familie. You ought to be so farre (saith he) from complaining of the time which I haue reserued vnto my selfe, that of seuen dayes there should be one dedicated to my seruice: that if you be not ouer cruel and vnmerciful, if you vse not tyrannie toward them which are vnder your authoritie, such a day would seeme conuenient vnto you to be chosen. For if you should haue no other regarde, but this policie: namely, that in this day your seruants shall haue some rest, this ought to leade you hereunto: but vnderstande you alwayes, that I haue not ordayned it onely for your familie, but for this ende, you might vnuise your selues, considering of this

which I haue shewed, that being separated from the vnfaythfull, you bee vnto me a royal priesthood, that you desire nothing else but to serue mée in al vprightnesse, and in a pure and sincere conscience. When you shall haue this consideration, then shal you know that this day shal further serue you for some earthly profite and commoditie, albeit in the meane time, this is not that you ought to seeke after. To speake in a word, our Lord in this place declareth vnto vs
Mat. 6. 33. that which in like manner hath bene pronounced by Iesus Christ, that when wee shall seeke the kingdome of God, all other thinges shalbe cast vppon vs. For we are of that minde, that if we endeuour to mount on high to the heauenly life, and bestowe our studies herein, we shal dye for hunger, and this shalbe to turne vs from all profits and commodities. Briefly, the diuel cõmeth alwaies to persuade vs vnder this shadowe and wilinesse, that if wee employ our selues to the seruice of God, wée must néeds dye of famyne, and that wee shal liue to bée pitied of others for our miserie, that wée must néeds quit our selues of the whole world. But of a truth we cannot serue God, except wée bée ridde of all our affections, and cast from vs these worldly cares, which presse vs downe ouermuch. Yet neuertheless, wee must rest vppon this blessing which is promised vs: namely, that if wée seeke after the kingdome of heauen, wée shalbe blessed in these temporal and transitorie things, that our Lorde wil haue pitie vpon vs, and wil giue vs al that which he knoweth to bée needful and conuenient for this present life: onely, let vs but waite for from him those thinges which wée by our industrie and labour cannot obtaine. That then is the thing which is declared vnto vs in this place. Now this sentence ought to serue vs as a pricke to stirre vs vp to follow that which God hath commanded vs. For the chiefe thing which stayeth vs from ruling and ordering our life to the obedience of God, is this, that being too much wedded to our selues, wee thinke this shalbe against our profite, and we wil alwaies prouide, howsoeuer the case stands, for our cõmodities, in those things which appertaine vnto the world. Behold how men cannot followe God, but rather forsake him, and drawe cleane backward from his lawe: for that they thinke, if they serue God, they shall neuer thriue. Now this is so wicked an vnthankfulnesse, that it serueth to aggrauate an hundred times more our rebellion. What must we thẽ do? Let vs note wel, that we shal not be able to serue God with a frank

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and frée courage, except wee bee resolued, that hee prouideth for our whole life, and that hee will not forget vs, as it is spoken in the person of Iosue. For the Apostle in the Epistle to ỳ Hebrews applyeth this doctrine to al the faithful. Yea to drawe them from ouermuch care and carcking, he saith, Thy God wil not faile thée, hee will not forget thée. So if once we can be perswaded that God watcheth ouer vs, & that he will liberally prouide for our necessities, it is certaine wée shal not bee so busied in our earthly affections, wée shall not bee so easily turned from seruing of GOD, wée shall not bee hindered to meditate and thinke on the heauenly life, wee shall so passe through this world, as to vse the creatures therof, as if we vsed them not, because we know alwaies, that we ought to make our race further. Lo, in summe, what we haue to beare in mind of this doctrine, wherein our Lord sheweth, that albeit this which he commaundeth of obseruing the Sabbaoth day bee spiritual: yet notwithstanding, that men shal perceiue herein their gaine and profite, and that God wil bleese them, when they shal haue a respect vnto him, and shall not ouer busily & grédily séeke after that which belongeth to their temporal and earthly commodities. Now withal wee are warned, that if any beare rule ouer others, they ought not to despyse their neighbours, although they be inferiour to them. And this extendeth it selfe very farre. For we ought not onely to expound it of men seruants, and of maides: but of the poore, of them which are neither in authoritie, credite, nor estimation: of al subiectes, of them which in the eye of the world are not worthy to be compared with vs. For wée see what the pride of men is, although wee haue no occasion to aduaunce our selues aboue others, yet euery one wil desire, and seeke after some preeminence and superioritie. Séeing then there is such an hautines in vs, that euery one wisheth to be lifted aboue his neighbours: yea, though he haue nothing in him why hee shoulde bee aduanced, to what outrage wil we growe when we be exalted? Behold them which are in the seate of iustice, they would beare themselues in hand, that the worlde were created onely for them, if God held them not backe by his spirit, and shewed them, that they ought not to oppresse them which are vnder their charge: but rather that it belongeth vnto them to execute the office of fathers, to holde their neighbours as their children: and that forasmuch as GOD hath so highly honoured them, they ought to walke in so much the

Iosue. 1. 9.
Heb. 13. 5.

greater humilitie. They which preache the worde of GOD, and haue charge to guide and conduct others, if they thinke they ought to be exempted out of the common ranke, and despise others, woe come to them. For it were better they brake their necke going vp into the pulpit, if they take not paines themselues, first to walke after God, and to liue peaceably with their neighbours, and to shewe that they are sheepe of the flocke of our Lord Iesus Christ. Nowe, for all this it is true, that the riche may well bee serued of the poore, and when a man hireth men seruants and maides for his money, he will not set his seruant aboue himselfe at the table, he will not haue him lye in the same bedde with him. Yet notwithstanding, though he haue some superioritie ouer him, yet ought we alwaies to beare in minde this point, that we are vnited togither as it were in one flesh, and that we are all formed to the ymage of God. If we consider that they, which are descended from the race of Adam, bee our flesh and our bone, this ought to frame vs to al gentlenesse, although wee are as brute and sauage beastes one set against another. When the Prophete Esay would put men in minde of their base estate, to moue them to relieue their poore brethren, he saith: Thou shalt not despise thine owne flesh. See where I ought to viewe, and beholde my selfe as in a looking glasse: namely, in as many creatures as are in the world. Marke wee this for one point. But yet there remaineth more, that is, that the ymage of God is imprinted in al men. Then I despise not onely mine owne flesh: when I shal oppresse any one, but I violate the ymage of God asmuch as lyeth in mee. So then let vs diligently note, that God would in this place declare vnto them which are in authoritie, and credit, to them which are rich, & to such as haue some degree of honour aboue others, that they ought not to abuse those which are vnder their handes, that they ought not to trouble and torment them aboue measure, that they ought alwayes to thinke on this, that wee are all descended from the line of Adam, that wee haue one common nature, that the ymage of GOD is imprinted in vs all. Loe, what wee haue to note, and aboue all other thinges to beare in minde, seeing Iesus Christ is descended hither belowe to bee made of no reputation, to condemne our pryde and loftinesse, and to shewe vs, that there is no way to serue GOD but in humilitie, and that

Esa. 58.7.

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hée hath made vs all members of his bodie, as well seruantes, as those whiche are maisters and superiours, shewing that there is no difference, when the question is of comming vnto GOD, and hauing respecte vnto him, and his seruice. We must therefore bée followers of him. And because wée are all, both small and great, members of his bodie, and that he is our head, there is great reason, that euerie one applie him selfe to his neighbours. And sithence GOD hath declared him selfe our father, in more familiar wise than hée did vnto them which liued vnder the Lawe, let vs bée so muche the more perswaded to maintein a fraternitie and brotherhod among vs. And this haue wée further to beare in minde vppon this place. There resteth yet one pointe to be obserued touching this, that GOD hath ordeined a memoriall and remembraunce to the Iewes, that they were sometimes in Egypt as poore slaues and bondmen. Nowe wée knowe, that in that place they were euilliuns & cruellie handled. But for that they then sighed and cried vnto God, and he heard them, for that they then desired to bée borne withall, and to bée released from some of their miserie, GOD sheweth that they ought also to doe the like. And this containeth a good and profitable doctrine: namelie, that when we take vnto our selues the better bée inclined to acquite our selues of our duties: and contrariwise, when wée become cruell towardes our neighbours, this is because wée are become drunken with our owne ease, and consider not the pouertie and miserie wée haue bene in, or happilie may come vnto. He which hath bene hungrie and thirstie, in such sorte, that hée hath desired that some one should succour him in his necessitie, when he seeth a poore man, and thinketh: Well, I haue bene in the like necessitie, when I could haue bene willing to bée aided and relieued: yea, me thought some should haue had pitie on me to succour me: he (I say) which thinketh of these thinges, when he seeth a poore man in neede, shall he not haue his hearte mollified and softened? But what? When wée are at our ease, there is no talke of remembring our neede and pouertie, but rather we imagine and suppose, that we are herein exempted, and not to bée numbered in the common arate of men. And that is the cause why wée forgette our selues, and take no pitie and compassion vppon our neighbours in any

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miserie they suffer. With so much greater heede then wee ought to beare in minde this place, wherein the Lord seing vs so blinde, so giuen to the loue of our selues, so well contented to be plunged in our owne delightes & pleasures, so careless of them which endure penurie, & are in necessitie, expostulateth with vs in this wise: And what are you? Haue you neuer bene in any necessitie? And when you ouerflowe your bankes in your wicked dealinges against them, haue you no care to thinke: Behold, these creatures are formed to the image of God, if wee commyt any outrage against them, shal God take pitie of vs? Let vs then practise this doctrine in our whole life: and as often as wee shall see any oppressed with miserie, let vs remember to say, Goe to, haue not I bene in necessitie as well as they? And if now I were in the same estate, would I not desire to be succoured? Seeing then it is so, ought wee to exempt our selues out of such a condition? It beho[illegible]t vs noe to another as wee would that one shoulde doe vnto vs: for nature hath taught vs this, and wee neede not to goe to schoole to learne it. Where shall neede then no other sentence to condemne vs, than this which the Lorde hath already shewen vs by experience. When wee shall learne in time to commen thus with our owne heartes, without all doubt wee shall be touched with some pitie to helpe them which stande in neede and necessitie: and that we shalbe moued to compassion, seeing them endure miserie: so that if wee haue the power and abilitie to succour and relieue them, euerie one of vs will employ him selfe herein. Yee see then what wee haue to note vppon this place, whereit is saide, Thou wast a stranger in the land of Egypt: Wherebymeth therefore, that nowe thou also ease them which are vnder thy hande: for when thou wast a seruant, thou couldest haue bene verie willing that one shoulde haue borne with thee, and released thee of some part of thy miserie. But nowe let vs come vnto them which were not of the people of God, but did onely traffike, and had entercourse of merchandize among them. GOD willeth that they also as well obserue the rest: and yet they were not sanctified of GOD, and this signe coulde not apperteine vnto them (as wee haue already saide.) It semeth then that GOD vnhalloweth the sacrament, when he communicateth it vnto the vnfaithfull, and those which were not circumcized, to beare the marke and signe of the couenant, to them which haue

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neither the lawe nor the promises. But we are to obserue, that this which God speaketh here of straungers, let touche the selfe only, and belongeth vnto this people which he had chosen & adopted. For we knowe that if things contrary to the seruice of God be permitted, although one shal happily say, These which offende, are not of our societie and compaine, we shal notwithstanding be induced by their euil examples to folowe them. If the straungers had beene permitted to labour among the people of the Iewes, what might haue happened hereby? The Iewes would haue had weddings with them, and so haue defiled themselues: they should haue made small difference betweene this day & others. For when examples are set before our eies, we are easily led away to that which is euil. And albeit there should be no great occasion of turning vs aside, yet is our nature so inclined vnto euil, that we are easily induced thereunto. And how should we easily cease when we should be altogether vsed to worke vnto wickednesse? Thus if liberty should haue bin permitted vnto straungers to labour, and to doe their businesse among the people of Israel, they would surely haue beene corrupted, euery one would haue dispensed with himselfe for this liberty to violate the Sabbaoth day, vtterly neglecting the obseruation thereof. So then, to the ende all such occasion of transgressing against this rest might be removed, and that this day might be obserued with greater reuerence, as God willed that the beastes and cattel should rest: so commaundeth he that the straungers doe the like, vnto this ought to serue for our instruction. For it is to teach vs, that vices ought not to be tolerated among those which make profession of Christianitie, but that men ought to punish the offenders: yea, though they be but straungers & sojourning men. As how? When blasphemies are condemned among vs, if a man heare a stranger to blaspheme, to make a scorne of God, and yet he suffer him and dissemble the matter, is not this to suffer a stinking sore to fester, to the corrupting and rotting of all the rest? So I say, what is done when blasphemers shal be so borne withal, when they shal haue their slote and ful saile in their wickednesse, and that men will not represse them, albeit they be so open and manifest, that men may heare and see them. But it is too euident, that we are so far from punishing the blasphemies of them as they deserue, which are not of our religion: that it is to be seene how we suffer them in those, which are together among vs, & make profession of Christianity. And this

is to our greater confusiō. For when we suffer among vs either Papistes or Iewes, or other like (as at this day the world is full stuffed with contemners of God) when we suffer them (I say) to raile on the doctrine of the Gospel, and to blaspheme the name of God, shall we not breede vp so daungerous a disease, as after short time shalbe intolerable and past al remedy? If we suffer wicked and dissolute straungers to make here an open sale of their outrages and dissolute behauiours, must it not needs bee that we be drawen with them into the like wickednesse, and so altogither corrupted? So then let vs diligently note, that God will haue his people exercised in such puritie, that not onely they which make profession of being Christians abstaine, and keepe themselues from euil, but also that they suffer not, as farre as shal lye in them, others among them, to liue inordinately. For we must remember that the earth is, as it were vnhallowed and defiled, when the seruice of God is defiled, and his holy name dishonored: the earth (I say) in the which by his pleasure we dwell, is defiled and accursed, or at least is nothing beholding vnto vs, if it be not. So then when God hath giuen this priuiledge to his childrē, that they may remoue al idolatry out of the land wherin they dwel, without al doubt if they doe it not, they shal prouoke the anger of God, and his vengeance vpon themselues. If nowe we would permit, that the abhominations of Popery should be mingled amōg vs, if by some special priuiledge one would graunt a masse to obstinate Papistes, which would liue here, if one would yeld them some corner of the land to commit their idolatries and superstitions therin, euen if it be, but we should draw on vs the wrath and anger of God, & kindle the fire of his vengeance against vs? And why? Sithence God hath giuen to them which haue the sword of iustice in their hād and the administration therof, seing that he hath giuen them (I say) al power and authoritie to chace, and put away from out of the land al idolatries, and infections of Papistrie, certainly if they allowe and maintaine them, this shalbe euen to driue God away, that he dwel not, nor beare rule among them. So then let vs note, that not without great cause our Lorde would, that the straungers which dwelt among the people of Israel, although they were of an other fayth and religion, should be constrained to obserue the seuenth day. Not for any cause touching themselues, or for their instruction. For they were not capable hereof, but because they should not bee an occasion

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ɾ asion of offence to drawe the people into sin, and because the seruice of God should not be violated, and that the lande which he had giuen to his seruant Abraham for an inheritance, might be wholy dedicated vnto him. We are therefore hereby warned, not only to sanctifie our selues by Gods worde, but also not to suffer any disorder among vs, but that all such things be remoued cleane away. Now further note, that when our Lord will that we haue such a zeale to maintein his seruice, that euen they which professe not themselues to be of the Church, should be constrained to order & conforme themselues to vs when they liue in our companie, that we shal want al excuse, if we on our part be not wholie giuen vnto him, & be as mirrors & spectacles to draw & allure the vnfaithful, to win them vnto God. For if we, when they shal erre, wil reprehend them, & in the meane while they may perceiue the like or greater vices in vs, shal they not haue iust occasion to mocke & despise all our admonitions? So then seeing it hath bene cõmanded, not to permit strangers to do things contrarie to the seruice of God, let vs know that we are in double maner recommanded to walk warilie & in all carefulnes, & in such puritie & holinesse, that strangers may be cõpelled & forced to confesse, that our chief desire is willingly & wilfullie to honor God, & that we cannot suffer any reprochfully to abuse his maiestie. Thus ye se what we haue to beare in minde vpon this place, which we ought for this day with al diligence to obserue, albeit it be precisely giuen in commandement to the Iewes: for in substance & truth it belongeth vnto vs. For as in old time our Lord brought his people out of Egypte so this day hath he deliuered vs out of the gulfe of hell, & hath ransomed vs from eternal death, & from these deepe and darke dungeons wherein we were plunged, to bring vs into his heauenly kingdome, hauing redeemed and purchased vs to him selfe by the blood of his welbeloued sonne our Lord Iesus Christ. Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God with acknowledging our faults praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, that labouring to reforme our selues more & more to his iustice, we may fight daily against the lusts and desires of our flesh, and continue so long in this combate, vntill he hath fully freed vs from it, and reformed vs vnto his image, in the which we were first created. Whether wil grant this grace not only to vs, but to al people and nations of the earth, &c.

The 7. Sermon, wherein it is entreated of the second Table.

Deut. Chap. 5.

16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee, that thy dayes may bee prolonged, and that it may be well with thee in the lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee.

We are now come vnto the second Table of the lawe, wherein God sheweth vs, how we ought all to liue here together. For (as it hath beene aboue touched) there are three principall thinges required in our life. The one, that we serue God purely and sincerely. The other, that we liue iustly with men in all integritie and righteousnesse, geuing vnto euerie one that which appertaineth and belongeth vnto him. Now as the honour of God is more excellent than all that to vs concerneth men, so it behoued that in the first and principall place, the rule of honouring God, as for ought, should be giuen, and that in handes is dispatched in the first Table. Now then God beginneth to declare vnto vs, in what sort our life ought to be ordred, if we will applie our selues vnto the duetie we owe vnto him. Now we haue also declared, that God requireth no honour of vs for any neede he hath of it, or for any profite it bringeth vnto him, but it is for our welfare and saluation, that he requireth it. So then he will proue our obedience, and the loue we beare him, when he commaundeth vs to walke in al equitie and vprightnesse with our neighbours, and that we liue together in such concord and fellowship, that any one be not giuen vnto himselfe, but that we communicate together, and that euerie one according to his abilitie and power to do well, employ and forge himselfe thereunto. Now this is the proofe which God maketh, to know whether we worship him vnfeignedly and from our heart. For we might make many faire countenances, and vse great

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ceremonies, but God shall not content himselfe with it. And this is the cause why our Lord Iesus Christ saith, that the principall point of the law is iustice, iudgement, vprightnesse, faith, which word in- Mat. 23. 23.
porteth here vprightnesse or faithfulnesse. Therefore when we liue with men without hypocrisie and dissimulation, whē we are not giuen to our subtile sleightes, nor malicious practises, wee studie to minister vnto, and to serue euerie one in his commoditie: we maintaine right, and resist wrong as much as lieth in vs: loe the chiefe principal part of the lawe. Not that the seruice of God ought in the meane while to be forgotten, or that it is of lesse importance, but because it is vnpossible, that men acquite themselues in their dutie toward their neighbours, except they be led hereunto by the feare of God. Nowe let vs handle this commaundement last recited, which concerneth the honouring of father and mother. And here, although expresly mention be made of the father and the mother, there is no doubt but GOD meant to deliuer a generall doctrine, of hauing all superiorities in honour. For graunt we, which must needes be confessed, that the law conteineth a perfect rule of doctrine, wherein nothing is wanting: and this which we haue said, must needes be so. For if it hath not touched any thing of the duetie we owe to other superiours, as princes and magistrates, and those which haue the sworde of iustice: if it hath deliuered nothing concerning maisters, it should haue some default in it. Therefore we must conclude, that God hath commanded that all they which are in any degree of honour and authoritie be honoured and obeyed. Moreouer, seeing al preeminence and superioritie commeth from God and that they order is established and appointed by him, without the which the worlde could not stande: what might be thought if God made no account of this, when he gaue forth a certeine forme of liuing well, and in all holinesse? Neither ought we to account it straunge, that vnder one speciall kinde of obedience to be yelded to all superiours, the whole is comprised. For we haue already touched, how this ought to be obserued in the law, and we shall see it more plainly hereafter. And this was not done, because God could speake in no other maner, but for our better profite and instruction. For we know, that albeit men desire to seeme subtile and sharp witted, yet cease they not alwayes to couer themselues with the buckler of ignorance. If we might espie that the law of God prescribeth vs ouer lore, we would feigne haue some excuse to exempt our selues from the sub-

subiection of it. And if the lawe of God were not apt and conuenient to instruct the rude and ignorant, many would alledge that they are no great Clerkes, that they neuer went to schole. It shoulde seeme the, that the lawe of God might not bind them. But when we see that God abaseth him selfe to our rudenesse, and that he speaketh grossely according to our capacitie, this taketh from vs all excuse, this remoueth all pretences whatsoeuer: and euerie one is bound to order him selfe aright, and we al must confesse, that there is nothing which hindereth vs from doing our dueties, but that we be rebellious against God, and wil not beare his yoke. Lo, why vnder one kind God comprehendeth the whole, that he might instruct & train vs vp like yong children, whiche are not capable nor apt to be taught after some absolute and perfect maner. This therfore is the true and natural sense of the place, as we shall see hereafter. For as God deliuered the ten commaundementes or wordes, as he calleth them, so he annexed also the exposition of them, to the end nothing might be obscure, and that men might not doubt or dispute of that which they had vnderstode. We see then that God hath fully declared himselfe, and he wil not onely his will is we obey father and mother, but all superiours without exception. And let vs note that God speaketh here of honouring fathers and mothers, because he would draw and allure vs by suche meanes as were most conuenient and agreeing with our nature. We knowe that there is suche pride in men, that willingly they bende not the necke to be subiect to others. Euerie one thinketh he ought to bee a maister. Howe euer it be, it is hard for men to line vnder, vntill God order them to this humilitie, to submit themselues in all simplicitie of obedience vnto them, which haue any authoritie ouer them. God then seeing nothing more contrarie vnto our nature than subiection, that he might winne and allure vs hereunto after a most milde and louing maner, nameth in this commandement of obedience, the father and the mother. Now this is an execrable thing, and contrarie to all nature, if the childe forget his dutie towardes them, by whom he is come into this worlde, & by whom he hath bene nourished and sustained. Therefore, when the childe knoweth not his father and mother, he is taken for a monster, euery one holdeth him for execrable and accursed. And why? Though GOD saieth nothing hereof, though we had no holy Scripture to this purpose, though no man preached this vnto vs, nature hath al-

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readie taught vs, that this duetie which the child oweth to ỹ father & the mother, without detestable wickednesse cannot be broken off. Wee se then the intent and meaning of our God: namely, that in proposing vnto vs the termes of father and mother, he might winne vs to himselfe, that we might not bee as wilde and vntamed horses, to draw backe, but should in all gentlenesse come vnto him, to receiue the subiection which he laieth vpon vs. And forasmuch as all authoritie which men haue, proceedeth from him (I speake of that which is according to lawful gouernement) let vs giue al diligence to yeeld him the honour which is due vnto him, and let euery one in his order obay them which haue superioritie ouer him, let euery one consider of his estate and condition, let children honour their father and mother, let al the people honour them which sit in the seate of iustice, let seruantes doe the like towardes their maisters. Briefly, let there bee an harmonie and consent of agreeing in duetie among vs, according to the order our Lorde hath appointed, which ought to bee inuiolable. Moreouer, when here is mention made of honoring, this is not that children onely vse some courteous embracing of their fathers and mothers, that they put of their hat before them, bend the knee vnto them: God stayeth not himselfe in this, but the honor he requireth, importeth much more: namely, that children folow the counsel of their fathers and mothers, that they leaue themselues to bee gouerned by them, that they bestowe all payne to discharge themselues of their duetie towardes them: briefly, that the childe knowe hee is not at his owne libertie as long as hee hath father and mother. Wee se in effect what God meant by this worde of honour. To proue this to be so, can we haue a better and more faithful expositor of the law, than the holy Ghost, which speaketh by the mouth of Moses, and of all the Prophetes: and namely, by Saint Paule? For we shal se hereafter, that GOD hath declared the summarie and contentes of this sentence namelie, that it sufficeth not that the children yeelde some reuerence to their fathers and mothers with cappe and knee, but that they bee subiect vnto them, and employ themselues to serue and obay them, as much as they shall bee able. And Saint Paule alledgeth not this, to exhort vs to some ceremony of duetie, but bee saieth: Let the children bee subiect to their fathers and mothers, where purposely he placeth this worde of subiection. So then wee se, what this im- 1. Tim. 3. 4.

import teth and what is the natural sense and meaning of the place. Now returne we to ỹ which we haue shortly touched, to make our profite thereby, and to gather thence some doctrine and instruction, which may be for our commoditie. First of al then, let children know, that seing God hath giuen them fathers & mothers, it is greate reason they obay them, or otherwise they shew, that they are rontiners of GOD. And this rebellion they make, is not raised against men, nor against creatures: but this is as much as if the maiestie of God and his glory were troden vnder foote. It is said, that we haue but
Mat. 23. 9 one father which is in heauen, to speake properly: and this is not vnderstood concerning the soules onely, but touching the bodies also of men. This honor then is proper to God alone, to be called father, neither can it agree vnto men, but so farre as it pleaseth him to communicate this name vnto them. Now seing this title of father is as a marke which God hath imprinted in men, wee see that if children make no account of fathers and mothers, they do wrong and iniurie vnto God. As much is to be said of them which obay not their princes and magistrates: Of seruants likewise which vnder al degrees were confounded, and that they might beare rule without all order. And see why the Ethnikes and Paynims haue applied this worde of Pietie or godlinesse, to the honour which we giue to fathers & mothers, and to al them which are in authoritie ouer vs. Pietie or godlinesse, to speake properly, is the reuerence which wee owe vnto GOD. But the Paynims, albeit they were poore blinde wretches, knew that God wil not be serued only in his own maiestie, but then also, when we obay those which beare rule and exercise authoritie ouer vs. In summe, he wil proue our obedience in this behalfe. And therefore, seing parents and magistrates are lieutenants of GOD, and al those which haue any maistership represent his person: it is certaine, that if one set them at naught, it is as much as if he declared that he will not obay GOD. A man may make some fayre protestation to the contrary, but the thing notwithstanding is so for all that. If the poore vnfaythfull and vnbeleeuing ones knew this, and that GOD left vnto them such an affection, what excuse shal there be left for vs, if wee vnderstand it not much better? When we heare that all parentage or fatherhode proceedeth from
Ephe. 3. 15 God (as Saint Paule pronounceth) and that by the vnion of Iesus Christ, we are put in minde hereof, haue we not a more expresse and

manifest

manifest declaration of it? Must the Paynims be yet our doctors and teachers? But when they which name themselues Christians shall here be ouerblinde, or shall stopp vp their eares not to heare and knowe that which God hath declared by powerfull ministers, woe be vnto them for their condemnation is so much more horrible and grieuous. Let vs therefore briefly note, that we cannot liue here together beneath, except this order which GOD hath ordeined, be holily kept and obserued: namely except those which haue superioritie bee had in honour, bee had in estimation, and bee obeyed. For without this, there shalbe an horrible confusion. All they then which cannot submit themselues vnto Magistrates, they which are rebellious to Fathers and to mothers, they which cannot beare the yoke of Maisters and Mistresses, declare sufficiently, that (as much as in them lieth) they peruert and ouerthrow all order of nature, that they mingle and confound the heauens with the earth, as wee say. For behold the only meane by which GOD would maintayne and preserue mankind. Let vs adde further to that we haue said, the consideration of this which is elsewhere mentioned, that when God sendeth Magistrates and Princes, he bringeth the fears of them, not only vpon men, but also on braue beastes. For so speaketh he hereof in Daniel: and of this we may gather that they which liue themselues vp against the rule of gouernment appointed by God, are worse than the brute beasts, & deserue to be sent to such a schole as theirs. For our Lorde, to make men ashamed which are reasonable creatures, saith: That the fears of Princes & Magistrates ought to be extended euen to the brute beasts. May not a man then see that the diuell possesseth also them which cannot order themselues in all modestie to the subiection which God hath established, & without the which it must needs bee that all come to ruine & confusion in this worlde, as we haue already declared? Yes. And therefore if wee feele and perceiue in ourselues such an hautinesse as maketh vs vnwilling subiects to them which beare rule ouer vs, let vs fight against this pride of ours, and let the authority of God suffice vs for a bridle. For were we more wilde & sauage by nature, than we are, yet this ought (as I may so say) enchaine and tether vs herein, that God declareth that he is dishonoured by vs, except we do him homage in the persons of them, whome he hath placed in his roome, & in whom he hath imprinted his image. To speake briefly, loue to charitie beginneth at this end, that we be humble

and modeſt, and that none lift vp themſelues arrogātly & preſumptuouſly, that none eſtéems of thēſelues aboue meaſure, but ỳ wee bee ready to būble our ſelues, to the end we may bee ruled & gouerned in whatſoeuer it ſhal pleaſe God to require our obedience. Lo why in this ſort S. Paul leadeth vs to charity, when he expoundeth this cōmaundement of obaying magiſtrates. For he ſheweth that if we haue not this mildneſſe & gentlenes in vs, to bow the neck when our lord putteth on the yoke, we beare no charity towards our neighbors. If we deſire ſuch a confuſiō and medley in ỳ world, that we would that rulers & ſuperiors haue no duty & reuerence vnto them, it muſt néeds come to paſſe that al be ſet out to the ſpoile of the robber, and it were much better that euery one liued apart and without cōpany, than in the ſociety of men, to ſée ſuch a confuſion as ſhould be, if we kéepe not the rule of gouernment which God hath appointed. Let vs then wel remember, that to the end we may liue with our neighbors, it behoueth euery one to correct in himſelf his hautines and preſumption, & not retaine and kéepe it in our harts. But let vs learne to be humble and lowly, knowing that this is to order and make our ſelues equal to thē of the lower ſort (as S. Paule ſpeaketh.) That we may ſo do, let vs conſider our ſelues what we are. For behold what abuſe hath growen in this, that euery one would haue greater preeminence than God hath giuen him, & being (as we are) blind, we forget our ſelues, and know not our own pouerty, our own faults & vices. Euery one will thinke himſelf a marueloꝰ man when he is nothing. And herehence iſſueth this, that we make no account of our neighbors, yea, that we deſpiſe al the vertues & good gifts which God ſhal haue beſtowed on them. It is then ſpitefulnes and vnthākfulnes which ſtirreth vs vp vnto pride, in ſuch ſorte, that euery one yéeldeth vnto himſelfe more than appertaineth vnto him, & this is the cauſe why we cānot frame our ſelues vnto obedience, as we ought. But in ſtéede of this let vs learne by our vnthankfulnes to doe homage vnto God, when we ſée that he hath commanded vs to obay our ſuperiours. And beſides let vs know, that ſuch as they are, he hath placed them ouer vs. If a childe haue a father or mother, he muſt not ſay: O, loe my father is not at al ſuch a one as he ought to be, I haue iuſt cauſe to withdraw my ſelfe from his obedience: yea, but if he be thy father, it behoueth that this ſhalbe content thee, if thou wilt not abolithe and bring to naught the order of nature, either this which God hath ordained muſt be made

Rom. 13. 7.

Rom. 12. 16.

of

of no value, or thou must honour thy father what a one soeuer he be. And why? Because euen he which hath commaunded this to honour thy father & thy mother, hath giuen thee such a father as thou hast. As much is to be said of maisters, of Princes, & all other superiours. For they came not at all aduenture or by chance, it is God, it is God which sendeth them, (as S. Paule hereof speaketh) as all the holie Scripture giueth sufficient testimonie. Yea, priuately we are also to know by experience the prouidence of God, & the fatherly care which he hath of vs, when he appointeth Magistrates. Let vs learne then wisely to consider Gods goodnesse in all those which are in superioritie ouer vs, that we may thereby be moued to order our selues to their obedience. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in mind in this place. Now seeing it is so, that God hath comprised in a worde, & set downe vnto vs in a short summarie, the rule of obeying al superiours, let vs note, that by this he resigneth not his owne right, nor bereaueth him selfe of that which is proper & belonging vnto him. For behoueth therfore that God be honoured aboue all others: yea, and so, that the honour we yelde vnto mortal men hinder not, but that we giue him the seruice we owe him, and that euerie one studie to acquite his dutie principally towardes him. What not he (thinke you) discharge his duetie of obedience fairely, which obeyeth an vniust officer, & in the meane while spitteth in the face of the Iudge, or the Prince? Or hath madnesse wrought in vs? Now the like is done when we will reharue God of his preeminence, and so obey men, that we make no account of him which is aboue all. For this is against nature, that the authoritie which is giuen vnto men, should darken and diminish in any part the glorie of God. Let vs therefore diligently note, that when we are commanded to obey our superiours, there is alwayes this exception vnderstood: so that this derogate nothing from the right which apperteineth vnto GOD: of which it hath biene alreadie handled in the first table. For we know, that the seruice by the which God is worshipped, ought to go before all other thinges. And for why? Saint Paule also, willing to giue vs the exposition of this place, expressly addeth, that the children ought to obey their fathers and mothers, howbeit in the Lorde. And we haue said, that the foundation whereupon we ought to builde, is, when we will be obedient, humble, and subiect to our superiours: namely, to knowe that almightie GOD is represented in their persons.

Rom. 13. 1. 2. 3. 4.

Ephe. 6. 1.

Howe take away the foundation, and muſt not the whole building
rotter and fall into the grounde? But all they which haue not reſpect
vnto God, take away the foundation of this doctrine. So then the
going forward is peruerſe and wicked. Howe this ought to admo-
niſhe al well them which bee in authoritie, as thoſe which are ſubiect
vnto them. If themmen and women haue children, they ought to
knowe, that no ſubiection is due vnto them, except God haue rule
aboue all. What is then behouefull and neceſſarie to be done? It
behoueth a father diligently to inſtruct and bring vp his children in
the feare of God, and that he begin at himſelfe to ſhewe them the way
hereunto. The mother muſt doe the like, that God may haue his ho-
nour aboue al, both ſmall and great, old and young. Let Magiſtrates
in like maner ſeeke by al meanes they may, that Godbe ſerued and
honoured, let them maintein al ſuch, as ſeeth in them al that which
apperteineth vnto this end: & ſith he vouchſafeth to vſe their ſeruice in this ho-
nour which they deſerue not, to ſit in the ſeate which is dedicated to
his maieſtie, & to carrie the ſworde, which as a thing ſacred and holie
appertaineth onelie vnto him: let them ſhewe that they are in deede
his officers. Seeing then it is ſo that he hath lifted them vp vnto ſuch
a dignitie, of which they were in no reſpect worthie, let them at leaſt
ſhewe this, that in ſtraunge it is, that they haue al authoritie, & that
they referre it vnto him. So ſhe the whole bodie muſt ought to diſcharge
themſelues of their dueties, euerie one taught to doe the like in his fa-
milie and houſhold. Let thoſe vnto whome God of his goodneſſe hath
graunted to haue men ſeruauntes & maides, conſider wel that there is
a Maiſter aboue them all, who ought ſo to be obeyed, that his right
alwayes be referred vnto him wholy & entierly. Aboue what inſtruc-
on al ſuperiors, in what degree ſoeuer they be, ought to learne the in-
ſtruction, I ſay, which they are taught & commaunded obedience to
God. Moreouer, when fathers & mothers, & Magiſtrates will raiſe
vp themſelues againſt God, and be lifted vp with ſuch tyranny as to
challenge to themſelues that which perteineth vnto God alone, who
they will turne vs from his obedience, ye ſee the exception which be-
fore we haue put vp one, which maketh that they ought not to be o-
beyed. It behoueth therefore that God go before, and then that the
creatures followe after in their ſubalterne, as we may ſay, that is
their ſeuerall & ſucceſſiue order. And in verie deede the cauſe why
the moſt part, that meekeneſſe & humilitie is ſo little regarded in the

touching the first point. And againe, let children also consider and take heede they be not ouer arrogant and presumptuous, they be not headstrong & giuen to their lustes and appetites: but that they order themselues quietly vnto the obedience of their fathers, knowing that they are in dutie against god, when they cannot subiect themselues vnder the yoke which God putteth vpon them. Let men seruants & maides knowe, that if they refuse to be subiect vnto their whom they serue, that God is therby offended, and that they in the ende shall be found guilty of so great a fault as this, that they would not be gouerned by his hand. Now in the meane time let vs note, that God must be obayed first of all, that the people be obedient vnto their princes and magistrates, that this derogate & take away nothing from the right which God reserueth vnto himself, for he is also worthy therof. If princes will induce vs to doe euill, if they will ouerthrow the pure doctrine of God (as we see ouermuch in the world) that their fury and rashnesse is instant, to which purpose they hand religion ferdinat them lusty, making vs but an image of wares, which would haue the seruice and worship of God ordered according to their fantasies) it pleaseth not god that we be obedient vnto them in that behalfe. For who are they? They haue lost all authoritie when they reuolt from the obedience of him, whom only the chiefe and supreme empire pertaineth vnto. Wherefore we ought to bend the knee before God our father Iesus Christ, and that there be men found which would vsurpe such a tyrannicall ship, that in the meane time the honour of God shall be ouerthrowen, and all religion fall downe to the ground, so that we be not bound to obey both Princes, fathers, and mothers, that God retaine his soueraine right, all the whole: and that we be not hindered, to yeelde him the honour which appertaineth vnto him: but as farre as we may, without wounding our consciences, we must obay them in all quietnes. And though they which haue authority ouer vs, acquite and themselues of their duetie: yet we ought them obedience, so that the children ought not disputefully to behaue themselues when their fathers shall be ouer sharp & bitter vnto them, & shall exercise too great rigor against them. True it is, that fathers are forbidden to discourage them against their children: yea, forbidden to discourage them. Moreouer, although the fathers consider not their duetie, yet ought the children to beare with their patiently. Briefly, wee ought to beare the iniuries quietly and patiently of all those which haue authority ouer vs.

Phil. 2. 11

Ephes. 6. 4

And

[illegible] ye se what God would geue vs to vnderstand in this commaundement. Moyse he addeth also the promise: That thy dayes, saith he, may be prolonged, & that thou maist prosper vpon the land which the Lorde thy God geueth thee. But there resteth yet a clause in the commaundement, which for that we are hardly perswaded to obedience. God plainely for a spurre to pricke vs forward, saying: Thy God commaundeth thee this. And it serueth to the confirmation of the doctrine we haue alreadie touched: namely, that these shalbe vain & friuolous cauils by the which a question is made whether they which are in degree of honour aboue vs, be worthie of honour or not, whether they discharge their duty in that office or calling vnto the which they are called, all this shifting to & fro for our disobedience must be layd aside. And why? For we must contente our selues with this, which God hath appointed, we must rest altogether vpon his good pleasure.

Let vs marke what maner of speech here vseth the expresse lawmaker. This shall be an euerlasting thy God hath commaunded thee. As if he should say: Let men do their owne will & kicke against him, when they shalbe ruled with the yoke of obedience, yet shall neuer haue they good successe, but shall be punished for their rebellion. Against the pride and arrogancie also of men he setteth them vp on a sure of lifting themselues ouer high. For they shall be punished voluntary subiection, before God begin to worke, & do put them out of his hands. What will you be rebellious vnto God (saith he) when you enter into these disputes? Must he be ruled ouer me? And must I obey him, when he is no better than I? If you be angrie at men, sir, God opposeth himselfe, and he will know whether he shalbe obeyed & serued of you or no. And when he sendeth you his lieutenants, & you will not receiue them, it is a sure & certain signe, that you refuse also his yoke, in such wise, that his maiestie is violated, & he perceiueth that he is dispitefully entreated of you. Whence it is so, know ye (saith Moses) that the children which are rebellious to fathers & mothers, shall haue happily to alledge this or that: and the people which are occasions of seditions and troubles, shall well haue some faire tale for their defence, but this shall serue them to no purpose. And why? Because that God, which hath established rules and superiorities in the world, will also that we maintaine them. He hath pronounced the sentence heere, which cannot be called backe & retracted. When God hath geuen forth his commaundement & decree, we must make no question of our duty, but fall thereon, & hang on him only

stopped.

trapped. Now beholde all this, our Lord vseth much gentilnesse & lenitie vnto vs, and wonderfully commendeth vnto vs his mercy, to the end we should learne to obey him without grudging, & to the end we should not fall into superstitions, & vnto strange seruices. Is it true, that we haue about vs that God sheweth mercy in a thousande generations vpon them which loue him, and this was annexed vnto the Commandement, where God declared vnto vs, that he would his seruice should be kept in all purenesse, that we should not be addicted vnto idolatrie nor superstition. But this promise which is there, is extended to the whole race, and to all ages: but this is belonging vnto vs, to the confirmation of obeying of fathers and mothers. Therefore when we see that this is a Doctrine agreeable vnto God, let vs that are vnder subiection holde our selues therein, let them not be there vnto vs outrageous & rebellious, but let the bende their necks to be obedient in all obedience, and let them shewe that in deede they are willing to yeelde obedience vnto God: for although the parents ought not to be honored vnto immortalnes, whome hee hath sent and set ouer them in his owne name: yet see them to what purpose this promise is giuen: namely, that God seeing howe harde and dul we are at learne, would be heereby moued in our hearts, and winne vs by all mildenesse and gentlenesse, that we take it not in euill part to bee in subiection, and that it seeme not an harde and grieuous thing vnto vs to obey our Superiours. But because the whole cannot nowe be dilpatched, let vs briefly beare in minde, that for to serue God the better, wee must beate downe all pride and presumption which is in vs. And albeit by nature we haue this cursed rote of desire to be lifted vp aboue others, though ambition reigneth both in small and great: yet ought we not withstanding for preparing of our selues to the seruice of God, remoue this wholy from vs. And howe because humilitie is the soule and principal steppe all true obedience, as we touching men, let vs note well that we cannot liue together in vnitie and concorde, except they whom God hath placed in dignitie and authoritie be obeied, except they be recollied in his name, except men be subiect vnto their. Other wise it should needes come to passe, that all order and politie being peruerted and ouerthrowne, our condition become worse then the state of beaste and sauage beastes amongst the wilde Forrestes. And so all they which are rebels, and refuse lawfull authoritie, are enimies of GOD, of nature, and of all humanitie. Such are murtherers, whome we ought to abhorre and

detest. Now when we shall haue shewed with obedience in subiecting
our selues vnto them, we shall haue (that is the same we desire) also
that we haue giuen vnto God his due honour, and that in such sort, that
we do not in vain worship him with the traditions of men in Ceremo-
nies, but in truth, and in a pure conscience, with the honour which
appertaineth to him. And herein we must looke by all the rules and
principalities of the world, knowing that God ought to haue his au-
thoritie and commandements to take place aboue them, as his seate aboue the
heauens is higher then aboue vpon the earth. Therefore, as we are
to remember that the children must obey their fathers and mothers,
that the people must yeeld all due full subiection to their Magistrates,
that in euery family and household all the order which God hath esta-
blished, must be obserued: so he will haue there be such degrees among men,
to let vs beare in mind, that we ought to vnder-value our selues, rather
then to know that God, who hath soueraigne empire and authoritie
ouer the world, ought to beare rule ouer all creatures, both in, ouer
our whole life. And by so much the more we see how this cursed Po-
pedome ought to be detested of vs. For if there an hautie empire lif-
ted vp ouer the whole world, but to what other end is there to thrust
God beside his throne, and to bereaue him of the honour which ap-
pertaineth vnto him? For the Pope will verily allowe vs that men
ought to be subiect to their superiours. But what? Maketh he any
account either of the order of God, or of nature? Doth he at all but con-
trariwise, spitefully fight against all authoritie of holy Scripture,
her pretending another head and rule of politie, which God hath not
ordained vs. He will call himself the vicar of Iesus Christ: and
yet we see how he plucketh God out of his throne, and will not
suffer him to be head of the Church. Let vs therefore learne to haue
in detestation this rule and authoritie, which the Deuil hath erected in
this world, opposite altogether and cleane contrarie to that which
God hath commanded. And in the meane time, albeit in the ciuil
thinges haue not the course they ought to haue, so that Magistrates
abuse their power, let vs know, that they cannot pervert and take
away this which GOD hath instituted, concerning empires and
kingdomes. As for the authoritie of iustice, it must be maintained
and preserued: for it hath his fundation of God: it is not so with it, as
with this diuilish Papasie, which had no fundation but of the diuil.
But let vs know that God will alwayes haue in this worlde Kinges, Princes, and
other

The 8. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

17 Thou shalt do no murder.

I haue already seene, how for the better ordering of our life with men, we ought to yelde obedience to those [illegible] any superiorities ouer vs. For the first thing which GOD commandeth vs in the seconde table of the Law, and euen comming from him selfe to men, he placeth this as the meane betweene both, to honor them, whom he hath appointed ouer vs. It is true, that when we speake of men, we vnderstand some like and equal fellowship. For wee are all descended from the stocke of Adam, wee are of the same nature, and all this importeth that men are of like equalitie. But this notwithstanding, seeing it hath pleased Almighty GOD, to appoint certaine degrees, wee must returne vnto

this point, and obserue this grace, that he which hath purchased peace, be so esteemed and accounted of amongst men. And we ought not heere to make this allegation, Why? Is he better than I? For this difference of degrees accepteth not from that, that one is better than another, but this is the order which God hath established. Wherefore vnto some, who are not to be honoured, it is not sufficient that children honor their fathers by bearing some reuerence to them; but they must succour them, they must employ themselues for their behoofe and commoditie, as much as shalbe possible. And in very deede Iesus Christ sheweth that there is nothing but mere hypocrisie, when the children shall onely make some shew of reuerence vnto fathers and mothers, and in the meane while leaue them helpelesse in neede and necessitie. It is as to dishonour parents of their right, this is to worke the lawe of God, when men will obserue it by way of outward Ceremonies, as much is to be lothe of all subiection. For it is required that we make not some shew only outwardly but that we render all the right of dutifulnesse which appertaineth vnto him, which is in any preheminence aboue vs: yea, and that we doe this of our owne accorde and good will. Verily we would be exempted from all kinde of bondage and subiection: but seeing God hath ordeined so diuers an order, we must frame our selues thereunto, and that not by force and constraint. For what account shalbe made of this, if we obey God in despite of our teeth, and our hearte [illegible] the contrary? [illegible] Our will [illegible] pleasant, whatsoeuer our Lord hath commanded [illegible] then wherein consisteth the first [illegible] right walking with men, namely, that we honour [illegible] and mothers, and all others which [illegible] vs, must haue the honour and obedience which appertaineth vnto them; otherwise God is dishonored in their persons: and this is as much, as if we refused to doe him homage, & to yeld our selues subiect to him. Now in the next place after this first commandement, he setteth death. That we commit murder, it is true, what at first sight it should seeme, God hath not ascribed it as great perfection in forbidding vs murders. But we haue to note that God would comprise in some short sentence, all that which were requisite to the well ordering of our whole life. And therefore it was not for him to forget or

Mar. 7. 11.

haue any thing behinde. Now we must knowe, that the life of man shall then be well ordered, when they abstaine from doing of euill, from all wrong and violence: againe, when they walke honestly, in all chastitie, when they doe no hurt one to another, when they shall keepe their tongues also from harming their neighbours by lying or slaunderous speaking. All these good properties ought to be in vs, if we will conforme our selues to the will and iustice of God. Therefore we ought not to marueill that God speaketh heere expressly of murders, for this is the better to bridle vs, that we presume not to commit any outrage, or attempt any way to harme our neighbours. But for all this, let vs beare in minde, that which before we haue touched: namely, that God hath spoken after a grosse and rude manner, to apply himselfe to all sortes of men, and to be vnderstood euen of the most idiots. For we see how we euery one excuseth himselfe of ignorance: and if a thing be somwhat hard and obscure, it seemeth to vs, that we may wash our handes as innocent and guiltlesse, if we shall haue failed in our duetie: and if we can say, Oh this was ouer high and too profound for me, and I could neuer come to any vnderstanding of the matter: we think all is cockesure. To the end therefore that men might no longer haue such shiftes, God would speake in such sort, that euen little children might vnderstande what he saith. This is the cause why in so short and plaine wise he saith, Thou shalt do no murder. Moreouer let vs note, that God to bring vs by little and little to liue well, propoleth vnto vs those thinges which are most detestable, most to be abhorred: by the meanes thereby to take heede of doing euill. For example in this place he might well haue said, Ye shall do no iniurie, ye shall offend no man with your neighbours. He might well haue spoken thus. But he would rather speake in this place of murder. And why? Because this is a thing too rare in nature, when men aduaunce themselues to defate the image of God. We must then needes haue murders in horror and detestation, except we be altogether brutish and beastly. Howeuer it bee, this teacheth vs, that the thing is euer enormous and outragious, and which we ought to detest and haue in execration, which is as murder. God therefore to the end he might hold vs in more strong and sure bondes, and the better to withdraw vs from all harme doing and from all wrong and iniurie, sheweth vs that we ought not to pollute and defile our handes in the blood of our neighbours,

bours. Well then: when one abstaineth from murder, is this all which is required? Nay, there wanteth yet very much, as anon shall appeare, when wee haue more fully declared this matter. For God will haue both our heartes, and our thoughts in subiection, he will be serued in such pure and sincere maner, that wee nourish within vs no euill will against our neighbours. Therefore, when he speaketh of murder, it is as if hee saide: Marke ye, and be heedefull in this matter: If you had not the written law, if you were altogether as the Painims: yet should you haue this imprinted in your heartes, that murder is a thing wicked and detestable. Now I declare to you, that I holde and condemne for murderers all those which conceiue any outrage against their neighbours, all those which deuise any thing against them, all those which nourish within their heartes hatred and rancor. Loe howe God interpreteth himselfe. Nowe let vs diligently note, that not without great cause, our Lorde hath forbidden such murders. And why? Because we cannot dwell with men, but in abstaining from all iniurie and violence. Howbeit, vnder one speciall kinde, hee hath forbidden the whole. And why? For if hee had vsed many wordes, and made some long discourse, one might haue said: I remember not so long a lesson, and it was too hard for me. Loe why God would speake in one worde, euen to the end his doctrine might by and by be learned, and that his lawe might easily be imprinted in the memorie. We neede not turne ouer many leaues, wee need not haue any great registers, and volumes: this sufficeth, that God hath in ten wordes comprised the rule of well liuing. What shall he nowe be which may alledge, and say: I haue forgotten such an article, I haue not vnderstood it? For can we not beare in minde ten wordes? Alas then now, how God would hold them conuicted of shamelesnesse, when they haue not wel vnderstoode that, which they ought to vse. Yea see then why God hath spoken after so briefe and short a maner. Moreouer, hee hath so chewed these thinges, as the Prouerbe is, that digesting of them, wee might learne to order our selues peaceably to him: yea, that the most idiots might knowe, that it needeth not to be any great Clarke to vnderstande the lawe of God, seeing he hath descended so low, and framed him selfe so to our capacitie, that there is no poore wretch so ignorant, which may not comprehende and vnderstande that which is contained in the lawe. Loe,

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what wee haue briefly to beare in minde. Now seeing it is so, that God hath forbidden murder as a wicked and detestable thing; wee haue to knowe first of all, that he which killeth himselfe vpon hill and murder his neighbour, is not worthie to be nourished on the earth, as being worse natured than the brute beastes. For wee see howe the Beares, the Lions, and other wild and sauage beasts, spare those which are of their owne kinde, and are like themselues. And whereas although they haue not all reason to direct them from euil doing, if they haue neither law nor equitie: yet notwithstanding, euen this acknowledging of a common and like nature betweene themselues, withholdeth them from all crueltie. Shall then the brute beastes knowe well how to liue without hurting of their owne kinde: and shall it not be an ouer great shame, that men may not be withheld by some consideration, seeing that God hath imprinted in their heartes, how wicked and execrable a thing murder is? They (I say) are all of the same nature, euery one doth behold the image of God in his neighbour, and should not this serue them for a bridle to withhold them from all violence and wrong doing? Whither might our fact is further leade vs?

So then let vs remember, that albeit God had not spoken, wee are already conuicted by the testimonie of our owne conscience, That who so rayseth himselfe against his neighbour, despiseth nature, and is not worthie to be accounted in the number of men. But now, sith the authoritie of God is matched with that, which alreadie we know by the guide and direction of nature: and seeing hee sheweth vs, that the bloud of men cannot be shed, but we shal bee accountable therefor vnto him: when wee heare this, let vs learne to walke without iniuring of any: or otherwise let vs knowe, that God will bee our mortall enimie, as hauing alreadie declared, that all men are vnder his garde and protection. It is true, that this threate is not heere expressed: but it is sufficient, that hee hath spoken hereof in other places. For when hee saith: That man is created to the image of God, it is not lawfull to make any assault vpon him. For it is as much, as if our Lorde did say, You wage battell with mee, when you doe thus seeke to hurt one another. For I haue imprinted mine image & likenesse in you. *Gen. 1. 17*

If one deface the armes of some Prince, it is an iniurie to

Num 35.
33.
1. Chr. 22
8.

knowe, that hee notwithstanding shall not account to of theis things, as wee doe. Wherefore? They are all as weightie as murder. Yea see then why God hath thus spoken. Therefore, as he hath forbidden vs murder: so let vs knowe, that he hath interdicted vs to vse any iniurie, or vse any violence towardes our neighbours. When we haue done nothing, but lifted vp our dagger against any one, and haue touched him in anger and indignation, behold a murder is committed in the sight of God. If wee woulde well consider of this, should wee not bee much more sober in our dealinges than wee are? We shal see some so cholerike, that if one displease them, but with a word, loe forthwith the dagger is drawen to strike and to beate him. For it seemeth vnto them, that so there be no blood drawen, the matter is not great: but howe easie soeuer they be in their iudgementes, the sentence of God can not bee retracted, when he declareth, That all murders are mutinies and seditions, and all mutinies murders. So then let vs learne to liue aboue our owne fantasies, when we will be iudges of our owne faults, & let vs quietly and peaceably receiue the sentence which God hath giuen: and knowe we, that all those which violently attempt any thing against their neighbours, are already guiltie of murder before God. Loe what we haue diligently to beare in minde. But now, to make a triall whether we abstaine from all harmdoing, from committing any outrage against the persons of our neighbours, wee must come to the examining of our hearts and secrete thoughtes. For God hath not giuen vs his lawe only, to cause vs to liue honestly: but he hath giuen a lawe conuenient and agreeable to his own nature. We know that he is a spirit, & will be worshipped in spirite and truth. Seeing it is so, it behoueth vs to knowe, that he hath prescribed a rule, not only for our handes & feete, but for our thoughtes also & affections. It is true, that men, as they are carnall, when first the lawe of God is pronounced to them, they thinke they haue well acquited themselues, when they are faultelesse before the worlde. On the other side, they are verie readie, by enlarging their conscience, to dispense with themselues, and to take all libertie of doing euill. Now this is the cause why euen the Iewes, which ought to haue bene nourished from their infancie in the lawe of GOD, they take this commandement, Thou shalt not kill, vnto grossenesse, vnderstanding that they offended not GOD in this poinct, if so be they had not openlie set on their neighbour, to wounde

Iohn. 4. 24.

Mat. 5. 21.

and to hurte him. Therefore, except the fault were euident and apparant to the eyes of men, it seemed vnto them that it ought not to bee imputed vnto them before the face of GOD. But our Lorde Iesus reproueth them of this, shewing them, that the lawe is spirituall, and expounded of them verie sottishlie. When it is saide, Thou shalt not kill: you thinke (saieth he) that you shalbe absolued as guiltlesse before GOD, when men can not bring you to the barre for it: But I tell you, that whosoeuer shall call his neighbour Fole: that is to say, doeth but declare any token of indignation against him, is worthie to bee punished with hell fire: Whosoeuer iniurieth an other, is culpable of a Councel and constitution from heauen, so that GOD and all his Angelles shall arme them selues against him: Whosoeuer murmureth against his neighbour, who so muttereth and grummeleth (I knowe not what) betweene his teeth: although he doe not open iniurie, is in daunger of iudgement. Wee see to what point our Lorde Iesus leadeth vs: namelie, to shewe that albeit we shalbee able to protest, that wee haue committed no outrage, that wee haue not lifted vp our fist to giue one blowe, much lesse drawen our swoorde against our neighbour, and that wee haue not wounded him, that yet this is not enough: But know yee, saith hee, that GOD will beare rule ouer your tongues, ouer your thoughtes, and ouer all your affections, as by good reason he ought. Seeing it is so, whosoeuer shall haue spoken euill of his neighbour, the same is alreadie a murderer: for the tongue is as a sharpe swoorde. Therefore, albeit you shoulde haue neither swoord nor dagger to strike withall, when the tongue is so armed, to speake euil against your neighbours, when you abuse their persons, it is a kinde of murder in the sight and iudgement of GOD: and although you haue done no open and manifest iniurie, yet thinke yee not to bee quited for all this: for when you shall haue but muttered and mumbled something betweene your lippes against them, it sufficeth to make you culpable and guiltie before GOD, you shalbe condemned from the highe throne of the heauens, albeit you bee absolued before men, and that earthlie iudgement proceede not against you. When we heare this, let vs knowe, that it is hee, whome GOD the father hath giuen to iudge the worlde, who

who speaketh vnto vs. Wée ought not therefore héere to dispense more largely with our selues: for wée shall gayne nothing by all our cauilling shiftes: but let vs learne to haue respect alwayes vnto GOD, to haue a right and true exposition of the lawe. For what is hée which speaketh? Hée which beareth rule ouer our hearts and thoughtes, he which will not bée serued of vs with eye seruice, hée which is not contented that before men wée abstayne from doing of euill, but will bée worshipped in spirite and in trueth: who will haue that our consciences bée chaste and pure, that wée bée purged from al wickednesse. Thus when wée shall haue respect vnto the nature of GOD, wée must no longer extend the law of GOD to the outward workes: but we ought to conclude, that when God speaketh of murders, he vnderstandeth al enimity, he speaketh of all anger and indignation, of all rancour and malice against our neighbours. And indéede, that is the very cause, why expressly Saint Iohn saith, that hée which hateth his brother in his hearte, is a manslear. As if hée did say: You may make many fayre countenances, but albeit the hatreds you conceiue, bée very hidden and secret, and that you dissemble so déepely, that you shewe no token of malice agaynst your neighbours: think yée not for all this, that God hath his eyes shutte and closed vppe. Well it may bée hidden and priuie from men, which you haue not made open and manifest: but when you hated your neighbours in your heartes, that is to say, most secretely, in suche sorte, that none bée able to perceiue it: yet loe notwithstanding a murder committed before GOD. And in very déede, the reason of this, is most euident and manifest. It is true, that when the Princes and Magistrates of this worlde make lawes, it is not after the manner and fashion of GOD: but to this ende onelie, that euery one rule and gouerne himselfe according to outwarde order and pollicie, that none bée openly iniuried, but that euery one haue his right, and that peace and concord bée maintained among men. 1. Pet. 4. 5. 1. Iohn. 3. 15.

That is the intent and meaning of Magistrates, when they make their lawes. And why? They are mortall men, they cannot fourme the inwarde and hidden affections: this appertayneth vnto GOD, they sounde not the heart: for this is the proper office of GOD, as the holie Scripture attri- Acts. 1. 24.

buteth it vnto him. But yet this notwithstanding, when a ciuil lawe is made, although one shedde not one droppe of blood: yet is hee adiudged worthy to bee led to the gallowes, if it shall bee knowen and proued, that he endeuoured with al his might to haue murdered one. If a man hath drawne his sworde vppon one who wardeth off the blowes, in such sort, that he touched not his skin: yet notwithstanding, the lawes, euen of the Painims, condemne such a man to the gibbet, as well worthie thereof. And why? For the lawe regardeth not what is happened, but respecteth the counsell and purpose of men. Seeing then earthly Princes and Magistrates punishe him, which endeoureth with all his might to doe euill, although being hindered, hee bee not come to the full ende of his enterprise, what shalbe thought of God? Shal hee haue lesse authoritie than a mortall creature? Beholde (I say) to what point we ought to come, if wee will knowe, that of good right GOD condemneth all them, which hate their neighbours. And why? Consider wee (I say) what his nature is. Will wee therefore obserue this commaundement? Wee must begin in short and summary wise with murder. And why? For God would haue vs preuented and foretaken with some fright and horror, that when wee thinke of hurting our neighbors, of committing any violence, of doing any iniury, wee remember that this is an horrible and detestable thing, which he can by no meanes bee able to suffer. And why? Because this is a kinde of murder. Yee see then howe GOD at the first would daunt vs, and this is the point whereat wee ought to beginne. And if we thinke it a straunge thing, that God condemneth one bare on the eare for murder: nay, one verball iniurie, as wee may terme it, which is done but in a word: yea, one wayward grudging, be it neuer so secretely hidden within vs, if wee account it strange, that this bee condemned as murder before God, let vs consider what his nature is, and that he deserueth to haue more yelded vnto him than vnto mortall men. But earthly Iudges punish an euill and wicked affection, when it sheweth it selfe: what shall then God doe, vnto whom nothing is hidden? And agayne, we haue to note that, which the Apostle saith in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, That the worde of GOD resembleth him which is the Authour thereof, so that it must bee as a two edged sworde, which pearceth euen to the marrowe of the bones, that there is no thought in vs which it searcheth not. And why? For nothing is hidden in

Heb. 4. 12

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the presence of God. Seeing it is so, that nothing is hidden before God, it behoueth that this worde preache and sounde the depth of our heartes. So then it is necessarie, that all that which is secrete and vnknowē vnto men, come into account before God: and by this we be admonished to walke in such sort, that wee beare no enimitie nor euil will vnto our neighbours. But yet notwithstanding, wee must procede further. For this is not ynough, that men abstaine from doing of euil, seeing they are created to aide and helpe one another, and to maintaine and defende one another. God therefore, in forbidding of murders, sheweth on the contrary side, that the life of our neighbors ought to be deare vnto vs, that wee ought to employ all our trauell and paine, to preserue and maintaine it, as much as in vs lieth. But he would begin at the negatiue point, the better to declare vnto vs, that which he commandeth. And why? For we see how vicious and wicked we are: as many thoughts as are in vs, so many thornes and briers are there within vs: as many affections as wee haue, so many brambles and thistles, and such like things growe in vs. God therefore, not without great desire, would plucke out of our heartes, and out of our thoughtes, the wickednesse and the vice wherewith they are ouergrowen: yea he would correct euery euil and corrupt part of vs. For without this, it is not possible to moue one finger to that which is good, nay it is impossible to haue one good thought. This is the cause, why the Prophete saith, That men must breake vp their fallowe groundes, and not sowe among the thornes, as if hee saide: *Iere. 4. 4.* I see wel what you doe: when one telleth you that you haue offended GOD, you counterfeite some faire countenance, and it seemeth that you bee as it were reformed, and yet you alwayes continewe the same you were. But it is not ynough to plowe in a fielde, but one must rooe the grounde of rootes and thistles, and first breake vp the grounde, which hath ben fallowe. But while you doe nothing else, but endeuour to appeare faire vnto the eye, the thornes, the brambles, the nettles, and such other lyke euil weedes remaine still within. Yee shal not therefore haue any good seede, so farre shall yee bee from bearing of good fruite. And so the same cause our Lorde saieth here, Thou shalt not kill: in steede of saying, Take ye heede ye defende and preserue the life of your neighbours. And verily wee see, by common experience, how men woulde

acquite themselues before GOD, with some faire shewe and appearance, when notwithstanding they retaine stil their vices and corruptions, according to that which wee haue alledged of the Prophete. For if one exhort vs to doe well vnto our neighbors, true it is, wee knowe not howe we might altogither contradict and gainsay him. Wee would therefore acquite our selues in some sorte, but yet our filthy corruptions remaine still within vs, and wee doe but plaster and white lime them ouer, as they which would be at no great cost doe, when their houses are ruinous and ful of clefts. For what doe they? They stop vp the holes and creuises with Morter, and plaister them ouer, and all this whyle the ruinous and decayed places of their houses remaine still vnrepaired. So is it with vs, wee plaister and parget ouer, and so wee woulde lightly discharge our selues in our dutie. And yet nature teacheth vs the contrary: for if one will sowe a field, wil hee cast his corne among bryers and thornes? No: but when he seeth his ground, after it hath beene laide fallowe, to bee couered with thistles and thornes, he breaketh it vp with the plough, he grubbeth vp the brambles, he manureth and tilleth it.

Let vs then learne, that not without great cause GOD condemneth first of al the vices which are in vs. For hee seeth well that they haue taken deepe rote, and that hee shall neuer bee able to holde vs in such a stay, as to cause vs to walke according to the rule of his iustice, except hee first plucke vp this cursed roote of euill which hee knoweth to bee within vs. Loe, why he saith: Thou shalt not kill, as if hee saide: Wil you liue in mutual loue and charitie one with an other? It behoueth that euery one enter into himselfe, you must all diligently examine your owne heartes, whether you beare any hatred, any enimitie, any euill will against your neighbours, which may occasion you to attempt any one thing against them.

Let vs then beare in minde all these thinges; and let vs knowe, that when wee shalbe purged from all anger and choler, from all hatred, from all iniuries and wronges, wee must then come to this point, to vnderstande, that it sufficeth not that we abstaine from all harme and iniurie, from all violence and oppression, that wee haue attempted nothing against the persons of our neighbours, that

wée nourishe no hatred nor malice in our hearts, against them, whome wée haue borne euill will vnto: but wée must liue in all loue and charitie, wée must bée as brethren ioyned and vnited together, to worshippe GOD as our common father. Yée sée what the pointe is whereunto wée must come in this commandement.

So then let vs note, that when wée will profite in the lawe of GOD, wée must haue respect vnto the vices and imperfections, whiche are within vs, displeasing our selues in them, and endeuouring by all our might and power to bote them out of vs. Haue wée done this? This is not yet all: for GOD will not haue vs to bée idle in this worlde; he hath created vs not onely to abstaine from all euill (for the stones, and blockes, and other insensible creatures doe so much as that is:) but he hath made vs to doe well, and therefore men must applie and endeuour themselues hereunto.

Knowe wée therefore, that when our Lorde will, that the life of our neighbours bée deare and precious vnto vs, he teacheth vs withall, that hée whiche shall not aide and helpe his neighbours in their necessitie, slaieth them, as much as in him lieth. And so let vs remember, that we shall not onelie then be guiltie of murder, when wée beare some priuie rancour and euil will against our neighbours: but that then also, when wée shall not haue relieued, and succoured them in their néedes and extremities, when wée shall not haue employed all our paines for them when they stande in néede of our helpe: wée shalbe culpable of manslaughter before the face of GOD. Séeing it is so, wée must not in this place séeke howe to flatter our selues: for wée sée what the rigour of the lawe is, albeit in no point excessiue. For can wée so refuse and take our leaue of GOD, as not to bée knitte and vnited together with men, whome he hath created to his owne image and likenesse? Shall wée not beare this reuerence to him, who is our father, that wée liue in a fraternitie & brotherhod one with an other, séeing he hath linked vs together in such a bond? Shall we say that God presseth vs ouermuch, that he laieth vppon vs too heauie a burthen, when he leadeth and directeth vs to suche equitie and vprightnesse? Howbeit the case standeth

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let vs take héede we flatter not our selues, when wée haue intelligence of the minde of our Lorde, who will haue vs employe our selues, & bestowe all our aides to aide and helpe one another, séeing the life of our neighbours ought to be so precious vnto vs, as it is deare vnto him. Now haue wee the exposition and meaning of this commandement, Thou shalt do no murder. What resteth then, but that we pray vnto God, to gouerne and conduct vs, that we may as we ought, frame and conforme our selues vnto his will? For it is to no purpose to alledge that his wordes are obscure and harde, or to alledge that there are so many commaundementes, that wée cannot beare them in mynde. For God hath spoken and declared his minde in our speache, and vsed such brevitie, euen for this cause onely, to bereaue vs of all excuse. Againe, that we might not alledge that we know not at which ende or where to begin, the better to vnderstand the meaning of this commaundement, he teacheth vs this point also: namelie, that we must not, as our wont is, giue our selues leaue to vse euil vnder this colour of perswading with our conscience, that it is no mortall and deadly sinne which we attempt: but we must alwayes thinke the contrarie, to say thus: If I doe the least harme a man may possiblie haue vnto my neighbour, I am a murderer before God. Who ought to thinke: for when we are willing to doo euill, the deuill is at hande to blinde vs herein, to be willing at the first to kill, and to cut a mans throte. This (as I haue said) seemeth vnto vs a fearefull and cruell thing: for nature withholdeth vs from such rage and furie, as to say: I will kill and murder. But when one shall haue grieued and angred vs: well, wée fume and fret with him, and this seemeth nothing. But are we dispitefully handeled? Wil we be lesse moued, as farre as we are able, to quite him with the like: and if we vse no extreame and violent fiercenesse, we thinke we may well be pardoned. Are we more abused? We waue our dagger, and wée fetche our neighbour: but it shall be but one blowe, and no deadlie wounde giuen, and then wee thinke there is no murder committed. Beholde howe men dispetle with themselues. And why is this? Because they thinke of no other thing, but how to diminish their faultes. But it behoueth vs, as God hath taught and instructed vs, to followe a contrarie order to this: that is, that when wée thinke of doing wrong, of striking and beating our neighbours, and no vsing any hate or dispite against them, wée set murder alwayes

before

before our eyes, and thinke: Poore and wretched creature, whither runnest thou, whither doest thou cast thy selfe headlong, when thou seekest to be culpable and guiltie of murder before God? So then let vs not make this vain allegatiõ, that we know not how or where to begin, for God teacheth and sheweth vs, & wee cannot be ignorant of any thing, but wilfully and wittingly: and it cannot but appeare manifest in the end, that wee would not cast aside our eyes to see and knowe that which might haue beene visible and apparant vnto vs. Loe what we haue to beare in mind in this place. And withal let vs remember, that God hath first forbidden murders, not mentioning any thing of charitie, and not shewing vs before that we are bounde to succour one another as neede and necessitie requireth. And why? For wee are full fraughted with wicked lustes and affections, which of necessitie must first bee roted out, as a ground which is full of thornes and briers, must first, before it can be sowed, be ploughed vp, and ridde of all his weedes, as wee haue aboue saide. So is it behoueful and expedient, that wee be purged of the vices which by nature are in vs, or otherwise wee shall neuer be disposed to walke in true and perfect loue one with an other. So then nowit remaineth, that euerie one consider of his owne abilitie and power, and so bethinke him selfe of discharging his duetie towardes his neighbours. If I shall haue wherwith to aide them, I must conclude and resolue my selfe on this, that whatsoeuer God hath bestowed on mee, it is not for my selfe, that is to say: that I should onelie loue and tender mine owne person, but I must haue an eye vnto others: and when I haue the meanes wherby to succour and helpe them which stande in neede of mine aide, I must diligently employ my selfe herein. For there is a communitie and fellowshippe betweene men. God woulde not create so many seuerall worldes as persons, but hee hath linked vs all together. Seeing therefore it is so, that GOD hath placed vs one so neare another, wee must obserue and keepe this communion wherein God hath ioyned vs, and not forget that it is against nature for vs to hate our own flesh. But now betweene the faithfull there is another greater regard and consideration to be had, than this wee haue spoken of. For they ought to knowe, that they are not onely formed to the image of God, but they must also consider, that they are all members of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that there is a more streight and sure band wherwith they are coupled, Ephes. 5. 30.

ted, than this of nature which is common and appertaineth alike to all mankinde. And by so much the more ought wee to detest those which so forget all the vnion and coniunction which God hath set among his people, and all those which desire nothing els but to bring to vtter ruine and destruction that which God hath vnited and coupled, and to teare asunder the bodie of the Church. As wee see the ministers of Sathan doe, which are wholly set on euill and mischiefe, that it seemeth they would dispite God, how they separate themselues from them by whom they thinke they can receiue no profite, and who serue not for their lust and fancy. When so brutish and enormious an affection shall bee in vs, is it not a signe that the Diuel possesseth vs, and that the spirite of God dwelleth not within vs: yea, that we haue not one droppe thereof? Howe therefore let vs learne so to rule our selues in this commaundement, that beeing purged from all rancour, all malice, and euill will, wee haue diligent consideration of employing our selues to serue and minister to our neighbours, and to acquite our selues of our duetie towardes them, according to the meanes and abilitie which God hath geuen vs. And if euil thoughts and affections, although they bee very secret and hidden, are accounted for murders before GOD: what shall bee saide of the violent meetinges, of the oppressions, and excessiue demeanours of them which ouerflow their bankes so farre, as that they are ready to beate and to kill their neighbours, as much as lieth in them? Must wee not account them worse than all the Paynims in the worlde? But how euer it be, let vs on our parte consider, that wee shall haue euill profited in the schoole of GOD, if wee keepe our handes onely from doyng of euill, and our heartes in the meane time be not corrected and reformed. And further, they which will shewe what is the true perfection of Christians, must not onely abstayne from nourishing any secrete malice and euill will in their heartes, but they must declare themselues to bee brethren truely, and in deede, by employing themselues for the behalfe and commodity of their neighbours, as much as shalbe possible for them. Nowe if it bee not lawfull to nourish any secrete euill will, much lesse is it permitted to behaue our selues so inordinately, as to strike, and to kill, and to exercise any violence. And who so order themselues so, are as wilde and sauage beastes. And if this affection and desire of euill doyng hath beene condemned by mans lawes, what shall this bee, when the

1. Pet. 2. 17.

lawe

lawe of God condemneth vs: Let vs therefore learne to haue an eye vnto him, and not consider of our faultes but according to his nature. And because he is a spirite, and wil be serued of vs in all integritie & vprightnesse, let vs remember, that when wee shal haue withholde our handes and feete from doing of euil, we must also haue our hearts pliable vnto him: yea, and that in such subiection and obedience, that we desire nothing, but by our deedes to shewe and prowe, that we are truely and in deede his children, liuing in true fraternitie and brotherly loue, with all them which are called with vs into the same coniunction and fellowship. Ioh. 4. 24

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying that it will please him to make vs feele them better than we haue done: & that knowing how hee hath bounde vs to our neighbours, and will haue vs make proofe of the feare wee beare him in withdrawing our selues from all euill, from all iniurie and violence: let vs pray him to graunt vs the grace to walke in such brotherly loue and charity one with another, that wee all shoote at this especiall and principall marke namely, to honour him as our father, and to leaue our selues to bee gouerned by him and his holy spirite, according vnto his wordes and pray wee that we bee more and more confirmed in this, knowing that hee hath reached foorth his handes, euen to conduct and holde vs vnder his protection. That it wil please him to graunt this grace, not only vnto vs, but to al people and nations of the earth,

&c.

The 9. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

18. Thou shalt not commit adulterie.

Tit. 2. 12.

Saint Paule speaking of the life of Christians, hauing exhorted them to the feare of GOD, adoeth that they muſt walke righteouſly and ſoberly. Now, there is no doubt, but that this appertaineth to the ſecond table of the Lawe. Wil wee then obſerue that which God commaundeth vs in the ſecond table? It ſufficeth not that wee doe not any wrong or iniurie vnto any creature in his perſon, or in his goods: but beſides this doctrine, it is further required, that wee liue in all temperance and honeſtie. And to this purpoſe mention is made hereof, in this former place which I haue alledged to Titus, wherein is ſaid, That we haue being regenerate by the grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to the end we ſhould liue in this worlde in the feare of God and ſoberly and righteouſly.

1. Tim. 2. 2. In another place to Timothie he ſaith, That if there be a good policie and rule of gouernement obſerued, that ſhall make vs liue honeſtly in al godlineſſe. Therefore, touching the feare of God, that is that ſpiritual ſeruice wherein wee haue ſpoken heretofore, that God bee purely & ſincerely worſhipped of vs, that we put our whole truſt and confidence in him, that wee cal vpon him, that we beare him the reuerence which he deſerueth. But come vnto our neighbours. Wil we learne how we ought to be conuerſant with men? Loe two articles or points to be obſerued, to the which he placeth this purpoſe. The firſt is integritie and vprightneſſe, that is, iuſt dealing, that wee vſe no violence, no extortion, no deceit in the goods of our neighbours. The ſecond followeth: that we be not diſſolute in life and corruption, that wee ſhewe no vnlawfulnes and vnchaſt behauiour, that our liuing be not inordinate. And this is that which he vnderſtandeth by honeſtie or ſobrietie. Now we haue ſeene, when God did forbid murder,

hate

how in expounding this worde, we said, that God meant thereby to deterre vs from doing any outrage or iniurie: and not only this, but he would warne vs thereof, that wee shoulde seeke to liue in peace with our neighbours, and not suffer any to be troubled and molested by vs. It shal be further handled heereafter touching the goods also of our neighbours, that we ought not to beare false witnesse against them: and this appertaineth in like sorte to the iustice and vprightnesse which must be in vs. So then, if we wil reserue vnto euery one his right, we shal vse no violence or iniurie in the persons or goods of our neighbours, wee shall not attempt to spoile any one of his substance. But here God enterlaceth another precept. That we commit no fornication, which is comprehended vnder the worde of sobrietie or temperance. For, albeit wee robbe not any one of his substance, ale though we be no murderers nor barretters: yet being vnchast, dissolute, brutish, and beastly in our life, we may not thinke that God is pleased with vs. For no thing is so inseparable as vprightnesse, and sobrietie, seeing God hath ioyned them togither in his law, & that we see how he hath confirmed the same by his Apostle, expounding by that this which is here briefly touched. And therefore if we will know the natural sense and meaning of this place, let vs know, that God heere commandeth vs to leade such an honest and chast life, that there appeare no filthinesse, no lasciuiousnesse of behauiour, no vncleannesse in vs. As to what is the summe & contents of this precept. It is true, that especially he forbiddeth vs, in this place, to be aduulterers, that is to say, to violate & breake the faith plighted in mariage, that none entice and allure the wife of another: but let vs diligently note that which alreadie we haue touched, that God vnder one seuere or hainous kinde comprehendeth the whole, and setteth before vs that which by nature ought to be abhorred and detested, in the ende wee might the more abhorre all fornication and vncleannesse. [illegible] declared yesterday, that when men are farre in sinne, they labor to beguile and deceiue themselues, thinking the thicke shall not be seene. And so from the lesser they proceede to the greater: God contrariwise, to driue vs in a straighter bridle, setteth before vs the sinnes which are more enormious, to the end that being preuented with a greater feare, we might not so easily be imboldned to commit any fault. As if he said, Take heede vnto your selues, for there ought not to be in

your necke. Perſuade not with your ſelues that you ſhal ſlyde but a little aſide, for you ſhal haue a deadly fall: and therfore take yee diligent heede. Loe in effect why God proceedeth after this manner in his lawe, and why now he ſpeaketh not in general of al fornication, but of adultery, which is to breake wedlocke. Nowe wee knowe, that if any thing muſt bee kept holy and inuiolable in the whole life of man, it is the faith which the husband plighteth vnto the wife, and the wife promiſeth vnto the husband. True it is, that al contracts & promiſes we make, muſt faithfully be obſerued: but if we make cõpariſon, we ſhal find that mariage not without great cauſe is named
Pro.2.17. the couenant of God. Solomon ſheweth by this worde, that GOD beareth rule ouer mariage, hauing it vnder his garde and protection. And for this cauſe, if the husband breake his promiſe which hee hath made vnto his wife, hee is not periured onely towardes her, but towardes God. As much is to bee ſaid of the woman, that ſhe doeth not only wrong vnto her husbande, but to the liuing God. For vnto him is ſhe bounde, in as much as God alſo will haue the care of maintayning mariage, whereas it is ordained by him, and he himſelfe the author ther of. Therfore, when we heare this worde of adulterie, we ought to holde it as execrable and accurſed: as if men ſhoulde in expreſſe termes deſpite God, when they will as enraged and furious beaſts, breake the holy and ſacred bond which he hath eſtabliſhed in mariage.

Now then we ſee how highly God eſteemeth of honeſtie and chaſtitie. And why? When he will that we be ſober, continent, chaſte, and modeſt, he ſaith vnto vs, Except you be honeſt and ſober, you bee as adulterers: that is to ſay, What ſo euer excuſe you ſhal pretende before men to make your faults light and little, I haue yet great hatred for al your life is infected before me, you are corrupt and ſtinking in my ſight. We ſee then, as I haue already touched, that here is a ſtraight commandement to holde vs in al honeſtie and modeſtie. And by this we ſee how the excuſe of them which ſay, They doe none any wrong, when they are inordinate in their liuing, and ful of (many outragious enormities, how vaine (I ſay) and friuolous this excuſe of theirs is. For our Lord knoweth wel why he vſed this manner of ſpeaking. For it is not becauſe he is tongue tied, and cannot ſpeake other wiſe, for that he knew not in what order to ſet and di-

gest his matters: but because hée would shewe, that albeit men will make the matter verie smal, when they are dissolute and disordered in liuing, hée hath an other balance than so, wherein to weigh their offences, and will condemne all of them as adulterers, which abuse themselues to al villanies and vnchast dealinges. So much the more therefore ought wee to weigh this worde which is here mentioned, when it is saide, Thou shalt not bee an adulterer. But all this notwithstanding, wee must consider of the degrees which are conteined vnder this commaundement.

In the first place then let vs know, that God will haue the holy coniunction in wedlocke kept pure and vndefiled. For if our persons are counted precious, & our liues held deare in his sight, he will also that the loyaltie and mutuall faith which ought to be betweene the husband and the wife, be in price and estimation, that such an holy thing as marriage is, be not set forth to all reproch and villanie. And this ought to teach vs, that God will not haue a man cast an vnchaste eye on the wife of his neighbour. And why? For our Lorde hath alreadie coupled her vnto her husbande. Hee will that her husband be her shamefastnesse: that when we think on euil, and set our minds on any vile lust, we ought to stand in feare of that which is declared vnto vs: namelie, that God will wreake him selfe on all them which violate and defile the holy coniunction which hée hath set forth in his deare name. And this in like sort perteineth vnto wiues touching their husbandes: namelie, that the wife ought not to giue her selfe ouer to wicked desires, when she beholdeth a married man. And why? God him selfe hath assigned vnto her, her mate. It behoueth then, that except wee will bid battell to our Creatour, euerie one liue in his housholde, as he is matched, that this order be inuiolablie kept, seeing God is the author thereof. This is one point to be obserued.

Moreouer, we must alwayes returne to this point, to consider of the nature of God, that he is not an earthly Lawgiuer, that forbiddeth not onelie the exteriour acte, and permitteth vs in the meane while to bée giuen vnto our wicked lustes and affections. For GOD will not bée serued with eye seruice, and forbiddeth not onelie the acte it selfe when marriage shall be broken and violated, but he inueyeth all wicked desires and affections. And this

is the cause why Iesus Christ saith, That he which looketh but awry on the wife of another, that euen he is an aduulterer before God: and albeit he be not culpable by the lawes of men, and that hée may be accounted chaft, as not hauing committed any whoredome: yet notwithstanding, before God he is already condemned, as if hée had committed fornication. Therefore when wee heare this worde of aduulterie, which is so condemned, let vs learne to abstayne from all fornication, not onely touching the act thereof, but to keepe and reteine all our senses chaft, that chastitie and continencie be both in our eyes and in our heart. For behold how S. Paule hath defined true chastitie when he saith, That al which are vnmarried ought to study how they may obey God, by keeping their bodies & their minds pure & cleane. He saith not, That they who haue not defiled their bodies by fornications, remaine chaste: but they which take paynes to keepe both their bodies and soules vndefiled. And whé we shal haue considered, how God abhorreth and detesteth al aduulteries, we must yet go further, applying and extending the same to all fornication and vncleannesse. True it is, that he which breaketh the fayth and troeth of marriage, committeth a double offence, and much more enormious (as I haue already said:) but we must alwayes remember this, that God will not haue men only not to attempt any thing against marriage, but he commandeth also that mé lead not a brutish life, that they suffer not fornications to haue their full flote. He forbids them which are not married, to wander hither & thither in their concupiscences, and to abandon themselues to al lustfull meetinges, willing them to be pure and cleane both in bodies and minds. For he saith, That not onely their soules, but also their bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost, as it hath beene already recited. And these are the wordes of S. Paul, whé he warneth the Corinthians, that they were a wicked & infamous thing for them to suffer, as they had already suffred fornications among them. Know ye not (saith he) that your bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost? Loe then, seing God doth vs this honor, to chose our vile bodies, which are not only brittle vessels, but carions, euen earth and rottennes, & yet notwithstanding God honoreth them so far, as to make them temples of his holy spirit, to dwell in: & shal we venter so to molle thé in all filth & infectiō? shall we make them as stables and sties for hogs? What a treachery is that

Mat. 5. 28.

1. Cor. 7. 34.

1. Cor. 6. 15.

that

What an abhominable wickednesse? Neither is this all. For let vs consider whither S. Paule leadeth vs. Our bodies (saith hee) are the members of Iesus Christ. This is then all one, as if a man shoulde rent in peeces the body of Iesus Christ, when he abandoneth his body vnto fornication and vncleannesse. For it is certaine that we cannot intermingle the sonne of God with our filthes & abhominations, he being the fountaine of al puritie. So then, when a man yeeldeth himselfe vnto fornication, he doth as it were teare in sunder the body of our Lord Iesus Christ, as much as lieth in him, not that we may do it, for the sonne of God is not subiect vnto vs, to be so dishonored, but we notwithstãding shalbe culpable of such a blasphemy as this, ive shal be guiltie of such an iniurie done vnto him. Therefore let vs learne that God wil, that not only euery one for his part obserue the loyaltie & faithfulnes required in mariage, but in general, that wee be sober, and chast, to walke in al puritie of life, & not to giue the bridle to all filthinesse and vncleannesse. The reasons which I haue alreadie alleaged ought well to moue vs hereunto: and this also which I haue alreadie touched of adulteries, being applyed (as to this purpose) may lead vs to all sober and chast dieting. Let vs therefore haue all our senses tyed vnder such temperance and subiection, that when the Diuell shall solicite vs to any vncleannesse, we may alwayes giue him the repulse, that he finde no accesse vnto vs, being excluded from all entrance. A certayne Pagan Orator (I wil so say, That it is not enough for a man to hauc his handes cleane: that is, that he bee not giuen to rapine and spoyle, to iniury and iniurie any one: but he must also haue his eyes continent, that is to say, he must not be giuen to wicked and wanton lookes. Al this hath beene taught by those poore, ignorant, and blinde wretches, what shal become of vs, if we remember it not, when we are learned (as I haue already sayde) that God hath ordained vs this honour, not onely to reforme our soules vnto him, but our bodies also, although they be mortall, and that tho they haue nothing in them but rottennesse and corruption: Seeing then it is so, that God accounteth our bodies as his, and that he will dwell in them, let vs learne to walke worthy, that we commit no vncleannesse, and be giuen to no kinde of filthinesse, to driue God from out of vs, who would be possesse vs for his dwelling place, and for his holy Temple. And withall we must remember that which Saint

1. Cor. 6. 15.

Cicer. off.

1. Cor. 6. 18. Paul saith, That other sinnes which a man doth, are cõmitted, without the body, but fornication is committed in the body. For it is certaine, that by theefts and oppressions we defile our bodies, and our handes (as the holy Scripture in this sense speaketh) that when we violently oppresse any, we haue our hands full of blood, as the Prophet Esay speaketh. But Saint Paule considering wel, that fornication is more shameful and ignominious, and that men ought specially to keepe themselues frõ it, declareth that fornication leaueth a marke behinde, which remaineth imprinted in the body, whereby it is open to al infamie and reproch. Wherefore if we be very desirous to conserue our honor and estimation vnspotted, it would greeue vs much, if any one should staine vs with some euil & infamous note: why then will we runne headlõg into such vncleannes, as to draw on vs a mark & impression of infamie and reproch in the sight of God, before his Angels, and in the face of al men? So then let vs diligently note this, & the sooner shal we be withheld from such corruption & filthines. For albeit our frailtie be such, that the diuel tempteth & alureth vs here vnto: yet shal this serue vs for a bridle, to restraine vs to this purtie whereof I haue mentioned, not only of body, but also of minde. And moreouer, let vs heedefully note that which Saint Paul writeth to the Ephesians, he remembreth of wicked persons, when hee saith: Let no man deceiue you with vaine woordes: for, for such things commeth the wrath of God vpon the vnfaithful and disobedient. For men flatter themselues at this day, as they haue done heeretofore: and it seemeth vnto them, that fornication is not so great and deadly a sinne. Yea, see some scoffers and scorners which scorne God, and call whoredom but a natural sinne, & say that fornication is but a smal matter. There are such filthy swine which will speake thus. Now for this cause Saint Paul saith: Let no man deceiue you. These scoffes, and flouting wordes enter in at one eare, & rise in the mouth of the contemners of God, and many blinde themselues, as we know the world is much inclined to flatter it selfe. Let none deceiue you, saith Saint Paule, by such lying woordes. And why? For fornication is a detestable thing in the sight of God, as he sheweth by the punishement which he hath sent vpon fornicatours: as Saint Paule noteth in the tenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where hee bringeth in an example of a mighty army which was slaine for this sinne. And by this, is it not manifestly knowne, that God can not tollerate and

Ephe. 5. 7.

1. Cor. 10. 8.

beare

beare with fornications? For the life of man (as we yesterday declared) is deare and precious vnto him, they are creatures made and reformed to his image and likenesse. Nowe, when there are one, two, or three thousand mē dispatched, so that God dayly openeth to great a number of his own images that is, of creatures which he hath formed, must we not say that there was kindled some terrible fire of his vengeance? And what? Fornication was the cause hereof. Conclude we therefore, that we must no longer seeke to excuse our selues, as if our faultes were light and easie to be pardoned, seeing our Lorde which exceedeth not, or palleth measure in his iudgementes, hath reuenged it with so sharpe a punishment. But rather let vs know and remember, that we shall be called to our accounte before the heauenlie Iudge, when happilie mens hate absolueth and pardoneth vs, and that when we haue thought there is in vs no infection nor filthinesse, God shall put vnto his hande and declare it. Wherfore let vs haue an eye vnto him, and the examples which he giueth vs, that we may exercise vnder his feare, and endeuour with great diligence to abstaine from all pollutions and spottes of filthinesse. He is in effect holye that ought to vnderstande this heauenly commaundement of the Lawe, that he defile not himselfe with any vnlawfulnesse or intemperance. Nowe, if we ought to keepe our bodies and soules vndefiled, we must flee and withdrawe our selues from all the occasions which might prouoke and leade vs vnto fornication? Wherefore let vs therefore take heede, that they which alwayes and giue ouer them selues to an vnchastitie, seeke nothing else than to entrappe themselues in the lines and snares of Satan: and although they are faultlesse in the eyes of the worlde, and none reprehende them: yet are they sinners in the sight of God. All this were well considered, we shoulde not be any longer suche childish trifflers in apparell, in gestures, and in wordes, as the worlde herein at this day (alas) vseth an vnchaste and outrageous libertie. What if men and women so attire them selues to seduce and deceiue one another, and to lay their baites for fornication, are there not so many whoredomes and fornications wrought? It is true, they will alledge no more, but, I haue not plaied the fornicatour or adulterer. But yet notwithstanding they will make them selues a preie for Satan, and will prouoke others, as much as in them is, into the same sinne. All these

enormities therefore, and superfluities, which are committed in apparell, which are vsed as snares to entrappe others, are reckoned for fornications, and are conteined vnder them before God. The like is to be said of vnchaste gestures and behauiours, of ribaldrie, and all this sort. When a man and woman shall so frequent one the other, that they giue place vnto Satan, and so frame themselues to his subiection, as to be holden fettered in his ginnes, and that they yeelde themselues bound and thrall vnto him: loe fornication committed before God. And albeit there hath beene no acte committed, no through proufe made thereof, yet shall not God leaue to punishe these thinges: for he is mightie to auenge. And hereby we see how childish and friuolous the shiftes and euasions of them are, which will excuse this, that not to be euill done, sooth there be nothing meant or intended: as they which would that vennies, and suche other disorders be permitted. Whatsoeuer, that no fornication be committed, is this euill and wicked. Thinke we it inough for vs, if we mocke not God, and horrible him, to haue to doe with him, whereas he is to be feared aboue all thinges? Thinke we that he knowe well that vennies are but the preparatiues of fornications, that they are to open the gate wide vnto Satan, and to call him to come and to enter in boldly, and without feare. Loe, what mischiefes doe all these bring with them, if (as I say) I meant no euill thereby, as he vseth that a litle Satan prouide salsely. What will the almighty accept good manners? And see why he alledgeth this from a prouerbe, that we might haue the more the greater shame. If we accept not of the doctrine and instruction which is giuen vs by Saint Paule, let vs be taught in the schole of pagan wickednesse, and of mockers. For they knowe well to alledge, When euill maners corrupt good manners, &c. when the tongue shall be infected with lewdenesse and vnchaste speakinges, that in gestures and woordes there shall be nothing but signes and markes of all wickednesse and villanie, if men say (as I haue the mentioned) They haue no euill meaning: is not this to die openly and manifestly vnto the holie Ghost? See then, I beseech you, that where all fornication is forbidden, it is to the ende that we should leade the modestie and behauiour of sobre men, both in our gestures and speakinges, and that no dissolutenesse, or vnruly behauiour be found in vs, which may tend

2. Cor. 15. 33. Menander.

tend any way vnto fornication. I graunt that all things are pure to them which haue their conscience pure, but this notwithstanding we must take heed, that Satan by his wilinesse preuent vs not, and make some breach in vs. Se ie in what sort this commaundement ought to be considered, that we take heede, not onely of the act of fornication, but of all that which is linckt therto, of al that which hangeth on, and is accessarie thereunto: of all that which dwelleth neere it, of all that which may induce and lead vs vnto it. Briefly, we must beare in minde that which lately I touched out of Paule, that as we ought not to do any wrong vnto our neighbours, touching their persons and their goods: so must we also walke in all honestie, and sobrietie, cutting off, and remouing farre from vs all those behauiours and intemperancies. Aboue all the speakings, as deames, and other like vnchast disorders are condemned before God, as contained vnder fornication, so are other intemperate and riotous demeanors. So that ie these drunkardes which glut themselues as brute beasts, when they are well whitled, not sticke to giue themselues ouer vnto all vnclenlinesse & filthinesse: they are thē so besotted, that they know not their owne shame. Therfore, when men leade so brutish & beastly a life, drinking excessiuely, and ouercharging them selues with meate, and after this prostitute their bodies, and abandon them to all filthinesse and villanie, albeit they commit not fornication in act and deede, thinke we that they shall escape the hand of God, and not haue a malediction and curse fall on them as vpon fornicatours? Se ie then how the doctrine where of Saint Paul speaketh, is so to be vnderstood, that if we will be chast and continent before God, we must not onelie abstaine from fornication, and from all wicked lustes and concupiscences: but we must vse our meate and drinke soberlie for our naturall helpe, and not to excesse and intemperance, so that hereby all lasciuiousnesse be shut out and neglected. For what must haue we then to beare in minde? Some, if one obiect & say: And how shall we be able, seeing the frailtie of our flesh is such, to abstaine from all pollution & vncleanesse? For we se the incontinencie which is in men, & in this thing as much as in any: so vicious and corrupt their nature is, proue it is true, that men shall not be able to be continent. For our Lord will that euen in this behalf we feele the malediction & curse of the vnity of Adam and Eue, in the brutishnesse of our flesh, except he by an especiall gift vpholde and preserue vs, as it

Tit. 1. 15.

to saue, all haue not this gift, so that euerie one must consider of that which God hath giuen him. But howe euer we feele our selues disposed herein, God hath appointed a remedie for them which cannot abstaine. God therefore, albeit his pleasure is to leaue this marke and signe of infirmitie abiding in vs, yet in the meane time hath he assigned vs a conuenient remedie: Shall some man perceiue this frailtie in his flesh? Shall some woman feele the like? It can not be denied but that this is a sinne: and although it be an inclination as proceeding from nature, I meane from this corrupt nature which we haue of Adam: yet is it in it selfe to be condemned. For all such vnruliness of the flesh, is farre from the excellent dignitie, as GOD gaue vnto mankinde, that we should be wholy like such markes, in steade of being as we should haue been, as Angels of heauen. So then, all vnruliness of the flesh is a vice: but yet so the Lorde beareth with vs, that he hath ordeined such a meane, as whereby this vice shall not be imputed vnto vs for a vice, whereby this vnruliness of the flesh, being in it selfe vicious and blameable, shall not be imputed before GOD, when it shall haue this cloake and couerture. And when a man, hauing that person not abstaine, after he hath prayed to God, & recommended himselfe vnto him, taketh a wife, to the ende he leade not a dissolute life, to exercise his lustes heere and there as chaunce for profite, as dogges and bulles, and other like brute beastes doe: when he shall (I say) haue his recourse vnto marriage, as GOD hath ordeined: loe, this vice is hidden and couered, and commeth not to account. And in this wise for the inestimable bountie and goodnesse of GOD, that when he leaueth in vs this vice, such a one as ought to shame vs: yet notwithstanding, he ordeineth a good meane, whereby it is hidden and appeareth not. And albeit men be incontinent: yet are they not accused before God, nor brought before his throne of iudgement, if so be they keepe themselues within the bounders of marriage: for all vnchastitie is not lawfull, as if a man would graunt him selfe an outragious libertie herein, and a wife like wise toward her husbande: for we must take heede we make not of our house a stewes. But when a man shall liue with his wife in the feare of GOD, albeit the companie of the bedde be shameful, yet before God and his Angels it wanteth nowe all reproche and infamie. And why? The couerture of marriage shutteth that which is

polluted

polluted and vnhallowed, it serueth to purge and make cleane that which in it selfe is filthy and vncleane. Therefore, when wee see that our Lorde is so bountiful and gentle vnto vs, that hee hath ordained such a remedy, are we not by so much the more wicked and vnthankful, if wee vse it not, and if all excuses which men alledge, be not hereby remoued and taken away? As who shoulde say, That GOD had not prouided for their necessitie, and that hee had not shewed him selfe so louing a Physician, to heale that euill disease which was in vs, as though hee had not at all interposed him selfe for our health, as wee see nowe he hath. Therefore, let vs lay aside all those excuses of fraeltie and weakenesse, seeing that our Lorde would aide vs in this behalfe, and hath ordained this holy estate of marriage, that all they which haue not the gift of continencie, giue not them selues ouer notwithstanding to any filthinesse and vncleannesse. Yet then see what we haue to beare in minde, and withal let vs further note that which the Apostle saieth, That the bed of mariage, as long as men and women keepe themselues together in the feare of GOD, and in all modestie and sobrietie, that euen this bed is honourable. So that, albeit by great reason it be in it selfe shameful: yet God turneth it all into honour. It is not lightly to be considered, that the Apostle calleth that honourable before God, which except he did pardon it, were shameful euen before men. But he pronounceth malediction and vengeance vppon all aduulterers and fornicatours. When wee heare such a sentence pronounced of mariage, let vs learne to shrowde our selues vnder so honourable a shadowe, if wee haue nede therof, that our lustfull desire bee not condemned before GOD, and before his Angels. And they which shalbe able to abstaine from marriage, let them consider of their abstayning for a time, that if nede shall require, they relent not, but haue recourse vnto this remedy, which GOD hath appointed: and let them so loue out of mariage from day to day that they bee alwayes prest and ready to order themselues to the rule of God, when he shal cal them vnto this estate. But nowe, heere wee may see, howe Sathan hath ouerthrowen the whole order which GOD hath assigned: yea, (euen vnder the colour of holines & religion) we see what abhominations are heere of procéeded: as among the Papistes it seemeth that it is the most Angelical vertue that may bee, so liue single and not to bee maried. Heb. 13.

For

Loe, an estate of al perfection, wil the Monkes say, when they are not maried. The Priestes will say, that hauing solemnized their vowes, they are dedicated to God. Againe they wil say, Wee are of his Clergie, we are as the floure of his Church, wee must be separated from the common filthes and pollutions of the world. So then among the Papistes one shalbe thought to come neere the state of the Angels in heauen, when he is not maried. Nowe in the meane time we see how God is mocked with so wicked and diuelish a presumption: for consider wee what beastly abhominations haue followed of this, that mariage hath beene so contemned and despysed. See these Priestes, these Monkes, these Nunnes, which dispytefully reiect this benefit which God presenteth vnto them namely, that if there bee any infirmitie in them, they may marrie: but they despise & disdaine it as a thing filthy & defiled. And this is euen to warre against nature. And therefore was it not necessary that God should reuenge himself of so presumptuous a pride, when men so dispitefully trample vnder foote a remedy which he giueth them? Shal we not thinke that diseased person out of his wits, which in stead of receiuing the potion which is giuen him for his health tubleth it to the ground, in despite of his Physician? so enraged are al these Angels of hel of the Papacie, al this pestilent vermine of Priestes, of Monkes, and of Nunnes, which haue reiected holy mariage: in which deede of theirs, they did battell openly to God. And not contenting themselues with this, they ouerflowe their bankes in such sorte, that they dare vtter with full mouth those blasphemies, which ought to make the haires of all men, which heare them, to stande on ende. Were there no more but this, yet hereby might we see, that the diuell hath gotten there al the rule into his hand, and that this is the vse of Antichrist, and of this Apostolical seate of Rome, to spue out such blasphemies: as when it hath beene there pronounced, That they which are in the flesh, can not please God: that we must be separated from al vncleannesse, and therfore that Priests must be forbidden to marie. Loe, the very words of a Pope, which notwithstanding haue bin registred to posterity, as if it had bene an oracle comming from heauen. Now, if the diuel should haue all the swing hee might wishe: yea, shoulde be vnchained and let lose in the worlde, could he speake after a more detestable maner, to despite God, for instituting of mariage, than to say: That they which are in the flesh, can not please God?

Syricius.

God. This is, as if he should condemne all mankinde: for in this he condemneth, not onelie them which liue at this day, but all the holy fathers which haue liued vnder the lawe, al the holie Patriarches, all the Apostles, and the holie Martyrs: to behold a veniit of Rome, which will banish out of the kingdome of heauen, both the Apostles, the Martyrs, and al the holie Fathers. Thus he which walke in the Paradise of the Pope, must be a companion of the deuill of hell: for albeit this be an enormious and outragious thing, that this miserable Sprite hath pronounced such a blasphemie, as thereby to exclude the greter part of the holiest personages, which euer haue liued from the kingdome of heauen: yet would God neuer haue suffered, that such an horrible blasphemie should haue bene pronounced, but that thereby he would make manifest this abhominable state of Rome, when he would permit these deuils so farre, as vnder a colour of holinesse, to reiect marriage: and suffer them for a iust vengeance, to loose the bridle to all wicked and infectious lustes, and to infect the world with their detestable Sodomitries: insomuche that they receiue in that wickednesse, which the Paynims (men without God) haue put in horrour and execration. Now, by this we are warned (as I haue already said) not to set light by the giftes and benefites of God, but to vse them with al sobrietie, so that they which cannot contein themselues, bende their neckes, and receiue with all gentlenesse, the yoke of marriage, subiecting themselues thereunto: knowing that when the husbandes shall beare with the wiues, and the wiues shall labor to liue in peace and good quietnesse with their husbandes, this shalbe a sacrifice acceptable vnto God. If they haue a great charge of children, let them take heede to nourish and bring them vp, be they poore or rich, knowing that God accepteth & receiueth in good part, this seruice. Let women also, when they shal haue much trouble & griefe in caring for their youthe, knowe, that there are so many sacrifices acceptable vnto God. And albeit marriage bee condemned by these deuils, which (for to despite God) imagine it an Angelicall perfection, to abstaine from it: let them notwithstanding, which are in this holie estate, knowe, that God accepteth of them, that he receiueth them, that he gardeth and protecteth their house and familie. For, seeing he saith, That he is the author of marriage, he will blesse it, when we shall proceede therein, according to his will and pleasure. Let them which are not married, take diligent heede notwithstan-

ding to walke in the feare of God, and to esteeme and honour mar-
riage as it behoueth. Let both the one and the other endeuour to
keepe them selues in all puritie, both of bodie and of minde, as S.
1. Cor. 7. 34. Paule hereof speaketh in the seuenth of the first to the Corinthians,
where he condemneth not the widowes and the rest which abstaine
from marriage, but exhorteth them to do their duelies. For the
virgins, and widowes, and such as are not married, ought so much
the more to cleane vnto God, and to walke in his feare, as being
lesse hindered to dedicate them selues wholie vnto him. And why?
For they are not distracted with so many cares of the worlde. They
which are married, haue more incumberances: howbeit, they must
also take heede, that they permit not them selues too much libertie,
but that they walke in feare, and in all carefulnesse of their duelie.
Lo then, howe in all estates we must haue sobrietie and honestie in
our persons, in such sort, that we may present & offer vp as liuely sa-
crifices vnto God, both our bodies and our soules, seeing he hath
redeemed them so dearelie with the blood of our Lorde Iesus Christ,
and that he would haue them dedicated vnto him selfe, to dwell in
them, yea in his temples.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good
God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him, that he will
make vs feele them better than we haue done, yea, in such sort, that
vnfainedlie displeasing our selues in them, we learne to haue re-
course vnto him, acknowledging the faultes and offences whereof
we are culpable, that we desire nothing else but to giue our selues de-
liuer vnto his seruice, and to please him in all, and through all, vn-
til we haue accomplished this course of ours, & ended this
earthlie pilgrimage, to come to that saluation, which
he hath prepared for vs, and reserued vnto vs in
the kingdome of heauen. That it will please
him to graunt this grace not onelie vnto
vs, but to all people and nations
of the earth, &c.

The

The 10. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

19 Thou shalt not steale.

If we well vnderstood but in one worde the will of God, which hee plainlie enough declareth vnto vs, we should not neede to studie muche for the right knowledge of ordering our selues, and of leading an holie and righteous life. But no suche ignorant person, as hee who will not vnderstand: none so deafe, as he which will not heare (as we say in common proverbe.) And this is the cause why we are so blinde, albeit our Lorde Iesus Christ hath shined before vs with his brightnesse, and hath made vs priuie of his will and meaning, as well in this precept of the lawe, as in all the rest we haue alreadie handled: for if euerie one would enter into his owne conscience, to make a iust and true examination of his faultes, I dare be not saie that it is easie to iudge, that whē we do our neighbour any wrong, when we deceiue him in his goods, what couerture soeuer and cloake we haue for it, that we be culpable of theft before God. But what? If so be we may hide our shame before the world, it sufficeth vs: and the iudgement of God in the meane time is troden vnder foote, and we care not for it: but yet all these figleaues, with the which we couer our selues, shall serue vs to no purpose, we must in the end come to our account before the heauenlie Iudge, and then shall we finde, that it is not spoken in vaine which he hath pronounced by Zacharie, That his malediction and curse shall come vpon him which sweareth, and vpon him which stealeth, that is, that in what matter soeuer of the lawe, and in what point soeuer we shal haue offended, he shall not faile to take vengeance thereon. Men therefore may well iustifie them selues, or flatter them selues: yet God in the ende shall displaie and shewe forth his indignation, both against sweareres, and against theeues. But the better to vnderstande the will of the Lorde, let vs knowe, that he hath vsed this

Zach. 5. 3.

word of theft, or stealing, to make vs haue the greater hatred all deceite and all rapine, in all kinde of wrong which wee are able to deuise against our neighbours: as we haue alreadie aboue declared of murder and aduulterie. If one call a man theefe, he wilbe grieuously offended, for this is a worde of infamie and reproche, and therefore hee will not suffer himselfe to be so dishonoured in the face of the whole world. God therefore might iustlie haue vs to hate all deceitfulnesse, all heartburning, all extortion, that we might liue in the goods of our neighbours without this worde in the mouth of all men. He might well haue spoken after some other manner: he might haue said: Take heede you do not pull vnto your selues the goods of another: take heede you take not your gaine by the losse and damage of your neighbour: take heede of vsing any such violence: but in a worde he hateth the whole. For we know (euen to the end, that deceite, rapine, pillage, and all the rest) that we be ashamed to do wrong vnto any, that we stand (as they) in great feare of men, when in deede that we are guilty of theft before God. Let vs note, that there are many kindes of deceites, for some vse open force, some vse secret sleights, when they vse them selues by subtile meanes and practises, the substance of all that is offered vs openly or secretly is one, and this is properly called rapine, pillage, extortion: others vse yet more fine feates, and colour matters subtilly: yea a man shall thinke they meane not a finger to touch any thing of their neighbours, a man shall not be able to accuse them of the least fault, yet because they touche not in all singlenesse and vprightnesse, they are theeues before God. So then, here we must consider of this matter, whereof we shall more large entreate in the place following. But in the meane time we haue to note, that God imagineth not of theeues after the manner of men: for they which liue in great credit and reputation before men, shall not easily be condemned before God: yea, albeit he accuse them, yet that is not a point to make them to be condemned. But that the poore whom they haue eaten and deuoured shall crie for vengeance: and although none of them speake one worde, yet the afflictions which they endure, crie aloude in the eares of God, and sue a processe against their oppressours, without sounding one worde. So then, we must not bring our owne fancies to iudge of the matter, thinking to escape the hand of God, when we shall not be condemned of men, nor punished by earthly iudgement: for God pursueth this matter further and higher.

Let

Esay 33.1

Esay. 1.25

he will in effect make diuorce with them. How happily this abuse
ment may get such a vent is a thing to bring to our conference,
albeit we haue enough plain. It is sure, that he which profit it shall
Exod. 22.1 deserue, will be a good and upright Iudge in this matter: and if he
know the deceit and vsurie which is vsed, he will say, such a one doth
vse to long. But we will not go to any great Doctor or Clarke, to
shew vs that one hath done vs wrong, euery one inwardly in himself
well perceiueth, and yet we thinke not on this kinde of theft, and we
Exod. 22.2 know it not sufficiently. But God shal not fayle to iudge and con-
demne him for a theefe, which hath so abused a simple man, and shall
haue deliuered him counterfaite merchandize, seeing he hath decey-
ued him which wanted all skill and iudgement. So in like maner
he which shall sell his ware to him which is altogether ignorant, is
all like a theefe, and both these are theeues and robbers. Againe, what
shall such a man make of a counterfeit piece of cloth? And the fault
therof is not alwaies so plain, how euer it be, he taketh for it as much as he
may possibly catche, without any reckoning of selling it. And it is
not to put it with standing, being charged therwith, he will say, I bid,
I haue to deale with a rich cobbe, the matter is not great, he hath
a good purse to beare it withal, the man which bieth this, albeit he hath
his shifting subtelties before hand to put the iudgement of god hath al-
waies his course. If one demaund euery man his opinion herein,
and al answere, We hold not this for theft: God not withstanding
shal not retract his iudgement after our fantasies. Yea for them the
offenderies which shalbe accountable before God, which he notwith-
standing let slippe: and no thanke to them which haue graunted the-
selues such a liberty, if the euill be not punished. But what? Behold,
the law of God is inuiolable, as we haue said: and it shalbe hereafter
declared, that it alwayes bringeth his execution with it. It resteth
then, that seeing we must not walke deceitfully, nor vse any subtile
practises, we returne vnto this equitie, which nature prescribeth vs:
namely, that we do not vnto another that which we would not haue
men to do vnto vs. When we shal haue such a rule, it shal not neede
that we haue any great volumes, to learne what it is to deale. For
in one word, euery one shalbe able to know how to walke with his
neighbours, namely, that he vndermine not his neighbours maliciously, that he seeke not to enrich himself at the cost and charges of an
other, that hee pull not vnto him the substance and goods which are

Rom. 13. 8. 9. 10.

wot al these admonitions & warnings. Thou shalt not kil. Thou shalt not commit adulterie. Thou shalt not murther, as S. Paule hath declared in that place. But what? There are very fewe which thinke hereon. But contrariwise, as I haue said, we are ful of vaine excuses when we haue killed one of his goods, when we haue vsed any fraud, any malicious dealing, any extortion. We haue me excuse or other ready at hand to serue vs. But yet it appeareth by our deedes that we haue no charitie, that we are as brute beastes brotherly, that we are not worthy to be numbred among men, seing we breake the bonde of vnion, in the which God would couple together all the children of Adam. Lo then, for the first note let vs learne this lesson of charitie, if we wil not be thernes. As for the seconde, let vs note, that we must not to be rich. For as soone as this desire of gayns shall be in vs, it is certaine we shall play the theeues: it can not bee otherwise. One shal at first sight thinke it strange: but yet, when euery one shall haue awakened his vnderstanding, nature shall teache vs, as the Ethnikes knewe wel to say, that it is impossible to desire to bee rithe, but we shal foorthwith bee inclined to scrape vnto our selues by hooke or by crooke, the goods of an other. Wil we then fly and auoyde theft: We must lay aside all couetousnesse, that is, all desire of enriching our selues, that there bee founde no longer any cauil in the matter. And howe shal we do this? Let vs learne to content our selues with our estate and condition. For he which shal not haue a certaine rule, but shalbe alwaies moued by some couetousnes, his affections shall carie him from one side to another, in such sort that he shal neuer haue any rest to say: I must holde my selfe within my bounds. I say, the condition and estate which God hath giuen vnto euery one, ought to be as a bit and bridle to keepe him in, as if it were saide vnto him: Lo, thy God wil that thou passe not this which he hath giuen thee, holde thy selfe content, other wise thou not only troublest al humane order, but thou despisest God, as if thou diddest make warre with him. Behold what we haue to note: that is, when we shal haue this rule of charitie prescribed vs, that we ought to learne to contente our selues with our condition. And why? Let vs know that this is the will of God, & that herein he wil proue our obedience. Howbeit this cannot be done, vnlesse we obserue withal the rule of S. Paule, that is, that we haue learned to be rich, to be poore, to hunger, to thirst, as wel as to haue *Phil. 4. 12*

whilest also Dauid speaketh not only that we ought to be patient in such like, and protesteth that he hath had his part herein, to the end we be not ouercome of temptation, & hasty shewed vs the way, but he saith that we should learne to be riche, and to vse diligently & with care that which God giueth vs. It seemeth a needles thing to tell vs so plainly and plaine, that men are not to steale: for euery man of his owne wit will abhorre it. Why? For we shalbe tempted to many inconueniences. It is an hard matter and grieuous, when a man that hath had to eate, & albeit he hath brought home bread, yet would he faine haue his cake and cammocke withall: so touching pouertie, euery one will confesse that we haue need to be exercised, and to be warned, that we shall not be tempted to vice and euil. But when he saith, it behoueth that we should be poore to be riche: it runs quite against this saying, as contrarie vnto all reason: yet this doctrine is most necessarie for vs. Let vs consider a little what these riches are: euen the treasures of glorie, which cannot be satisfied, & which are harder to get out of the hands of men. If we make comparison betweene the riches and pompe, wee shall find among the poore many which serue and feare God, which are sober and well gouerned, many which are induced to pilfering, and to exercise many wicked sleights and practises and gaines, shee shall finde also a great part content themselues with that which God hath giuen them, and keepe themselues within their limites and borders. But when we come to consider of the rich, euen as farre as vnto Kings, and Princes, we shall finde that they are so inflamed and set on fire, that they burne with such a desire after the goods of this world, that they are neuer contented: yea, they are as it were gnawed that the Deuil sitteth vpon the purse. Briefly, we shall see, that the most part of those rich men, to whom God hath giuen the wholeworld in possession, will yet not be satisfied, and to account it enough (as I haue saide) they are yet grieued that the poore haue one mouthful of the same with them, and that the poore drinke water. Although the poore trauell, and labour, and doe the best they are able for them, yet a rich man will enuie and also spite at them: although he enioy the sweate of their browes, and hath eaten the fruite of their blood: and it seemeth him, that a man pluckes his heart and guttes out of his belly, when he eateth one mouthfull of meate at his boord and charges. Such miserable couetousnesse, or rather such

brutish crueltie a man shall see in the riche: and this is a thing ouer rife and common. So then it is not without cause that Saint Paule saith we shall haue profited exceeding much, when we shall haue learned to bee riche: that is to say, that we shall not be stirred vp continually with a desire of getting more and more. If God giueth vs any abundance, let vs learne to keepe our selues within our bounds, without further coueting, to say: O, such a peece of ground would bee good & commodious for me. I must adioyne this to mine, & that other also. And againe, this is not yet all, that a rich man desire not to growe further in wealth: but it behoueth that we be poore in heart, that is to say, that we bee puffed vp with no such pride, as to repose our trust and confidence in our riches, that we take not an occasion by them, to oppresse such as are feeble and weake, such as haue no credite to vnderpropp and staie them vp in this world: lastly, that we be prest and readie to bee impouerished when it shall please GOD. He which at this day is verie riche, which hath his garners, and his cellers full, which hath his bagges fraughted and full stored, which hath landes and possessions, which hath a rich trade of merchandize: let him, when it shal please God to bereue him of all, not thinke it straunge: let him not be ouermuch grieued for it, but let him minde the patience of Iob, to say: The Lord hath giuen, and the Lorde hath taken it, blessed be the name of the Lorde. Ye see then howe it is a verie hard thing to be rich: yea, except we come to this point, to order our selues to the will of God, to receiue peaceably what soeuer hee giueth vs: that is to say, to beare patiently the pouertie which he sendeth, and to content our selues with that which he shall haue giuen vs into our hand, without setting our heart theron. For otherwise it must needes be, that we be alwayes thernes, whether we abound in riches, or be in pouertie. For the poore shalbe prouoked to do euil, & it seemeth them that God will dispense with them for their wickednesse: yea, oftentimes they will vse this cauillation: O, I see this man seeketh nothing else but to deuour me, and to teare the flesh frō my back, he would destroy me altogether if it were possible: and why shal it not be permitted me to reuenge my selfe on him? Lo how ouerthe one would pay himselfe. But it is not for vs to take from him that which he hath spoiled. So then if we be poore, we shall incontinently be driuen to stealing, except we take vnto vs this bridle, to say, Well: our Lorde will haue it so for this cause we want

Iob. 1. 21.

the goodes of this worlde. We haue not that we could wish, and this is to this end, that it pleaseth God so to humble vs. Lo one thing to be noted. And let a man labour diligently to surmount this temptation.

Pro.30.9. For who see that euen Salomon desireth of the Lorde not to be poore, for feare of being prouoked to steale. When suche a personage feareth yea, and maketh this request vnto God in the name of all the faithfull, ought not we to stand vpon our garde? So then they which are in neede and necessitie, both of bread and of drinke, and know not on which side to turne them to be relieued: they which lead so poore a life that oftentimes they haue not so much bread as to slake half their hunger: others which haue not their eases and commodities as they could wishe and desire: let all these in this case take hed they commit themselues into the hande of God, and pray him to giue them grace to walke in such sort that they be not moued to wrong or iniurie anie one vnder this colour, that necessitie pricketh them ouer sore. And let them which haue to spende and tyde with them, which flote in prosperitie and wealth, which haue their purses full of monie, take heede they oppresse not the poore: as they haue alwayes their nettes laide to this purpose. For so doe the riche behaue themselues herein. If they se a poore man falling into decaie, they are as greedie hunters, they come incontinently to ouerthrowe and cast him vnder foote, and they turne themselues hyther and thither, and make many circuites, vntill at length they haue entrapped the poore man. Let them therefore which haue wherewith to liue, take heede leaste they ouerflowe their banke: but let them hold themselues rather backe, so that they abuse not their plentie and abundance. Let them which are of greater wealth take hed they lift not vp themselues to oppresse those which haue litle. Behold how we ought to proceede in our degree and calling. Yea, when we haue occasions offered of doing wrong and iniurie, albeit we are of our selues subtill enough to seeke them out from farre, let vs beware lest we repell all such wickednes. And whereas rich men think that they haue made great gaine by the folle of an other, let vs knowe that they haue eat the throte of poore men, and that they haue made many widowes and orphans, though they thinke litle hereof. But because our wittes are so sharpe and subtile to deuise all occasions of hatefull doing, let vs haue an eie vnto our GOD, who woulde make a perfite and regall of our obedience in our vocation. We shall

haue

happily haue the sworn in our handes, but let vs take heede of doing any hurt: & let vs consider, that if we were in the same state that poore men are, we should gladly wish to be released and succoured of our debts: if we will abstaine from theft, let vs not be either cruell, violent, nor wilie foxes. For all they which walke deceitfully and craftily, are as wilie foxes. Truely poore men, what needs soeuer they are in, when they are led to the end, they shew themselues no longer men, if they vniustly take vnto themselues the goods of an other. But they which commit theft, theeueries by violence and oppression, are as bruite beasts, which seeke nothing else, but to consume and deuour all. So then, that we be not rauenous, let vs not be cruell. Aboue all let vs learne to waite for all that, which shall be necessarie for vs in this present worlde, from the bountie and blessing of God. If we holde fast this rule, it is certaine that all couetousnesse, and all pillaging, and all violence, with all such like vices, shall soone be remoued. We shall not neede then any other medicine than this to heale all our diseases namely, that we lift our eyes from the ground to God, in as much as he is our father, he will prouide vs of all that we haue neede of, if we seeke from whom we must looke for all that appertaineth to the maintenance of this poore life. For truely, as he is the only welspring of all riches: if we seeke [illegible] this, we should not neede [illegible] lings, we should not neede any more admonitions, [illegible] neede any more aduertisements, then only [illegible]

But what? Seeing the seruice of GOD our duetie to man, and iustice was proued that we should [illegible] eate our owne bread, and [illegible] kednes. Is not this euen to [illegible] Giue me my dailie bread, and [illegible] the deuil? For if we vse [illegible] from the hande of God, or rather from the [illegible] not companions of theeues and of robbers? [illegible] that we should the death entiche vs, [illegible] and errour: and whereof more is, it is a [illegible] and vnbeleefe, and that we attend not any thing at all on the blessing of God, and thinke not, that he is rich enough to sufficine and enriche vs. Loe howe wicked we are [illegible]

1. Cor. 6. 9. Ephe. 5. 5.

aught to profit our selues, when we heare that our Lorde accurseth stealings, and that he teacheth vs, that they are detestable in his sight, if let us hould them in greater horrour and detestation. Therefore let us first of all beare in vnde: that God iudgeth not according to the capitalle offenses, but that his will is, that we walke in all integritie and vprightnesse, that euery one haue his right, that none bee molested and troubled for his liuing and substance, that wee straightly withholde our selues from all iniurie and wrong doing. And againe because we are so inclined vnto euill, let vs consider of those meanes wherewith we may holde vs vnder the obedience of GOD, and purge vs from stealing, of which we haue already spoken: and let vs know, that God hath ioyned vs together, that we should keepe this law and rule of equitie. Moreouer, let vs not desire to bee rich, but let vs practise this doctrine, of bearing pouertie patiently, that we bee not inflamed with a desire of getting, and pilfering, and prouiding our selues further. Againe let vs abhorre and detest all craftie cunning and deceit, and shun all, let vs learne not to bee hastie in thinking that when we haue scraped together on this side, & the other, this may be to make vs rich. Let vs beware how wee deceive our selues in thinking also. And why? For true riches (as I haue before protested) proceede from the blessing of God. We must therefore drinke of this fountaine, and be satisfied, if we will abstaine from all kinds of theft. Moreouer let vs also enter in consideration of the threates, which GOD setteth before vs. When hee hath sufficiently shewed that this practise is of great equitie and that hee hath giuen vs the meanes also whereby to walke in all integritie and vprightnesse, both in hurtinges, wronging any one, seeing vs yet ouer hard to be brought to the obseruation thereof, and that alwayes our wicked affections make vs alway bending altogether backwarde from our duetie, he addeth his menaces and threats to feare vs, & to keepe vs in greater awe. And this is a small thing, and lightly of vs to bee considered, when he saith, That theeues and extortioners shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen: Loe then howe hee expresselie declareth and pronounceth vnto vs, that if we make so great account of this present life, as that for to pluck vnto vs some commoditie & further to passe through this present worlde, wee will wittingly prouoke the wrath and indignation of God, we shall be exiled, and banished thy kingdome. If we had but one drop of faith, (hould

1. Cor. 6. 9
Ephe. 5. 5

Iesus not

not this shall be euen to peeres vs to the heart. But yet our Lord
pulleth further: for seeing vs so carnall, so giuen ouer to the world,
he sheweth vs, that euen in this kingdom hee will make vs goe back-
ward, and he which shall thinke to lift vp and aduance himselfe by
subtil shifts, by bribes, by extortions, that euen he shall be con-
founded, he shall finde a secret curse and malediction, which shall vn-
dermine him, and consume him to nothing. As in that place which
we haue alleaged of Zacharie, this saith, That the curse of GOD Zach. 5. 3.
shall come vpon the house of the vniust robbers, and shall consume
them vtterly, they be whole consumed. Now to further this the
holy Ghost vseth by all the rest of the Prophets, by which we may
vnderstand, that when men shall thinke to enrich their children, when
they shall make their reckoning of, I know not what great wealth, Mich. 6. 12.
GOD shall lay vpon them a curse, with such a death, that all their 13. 14.
pompe shall vanish, and that so suddenly, that a man would not be per-
ceiue it in the twinkling of an eye. But to be short, we see
it is that we may reade often in the holy Scripture, that one sin
commonly and verily is punished with another, as if they were
ther together, great substance when it is ill gotten, is commonly
full of body like to fire. But we shall see further, that greater ruine
shall be the cause of their destruction, which shall haue labored to reuile our
reputation. Beholde, a father hoping [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[

when the latter iudgement is denounced them: Wel, but it is long time thither, when they oppresse a poore man, who shal haue neither ability, nor credit, to maintain his right against them. Mary, in the meane time they lyue in their iniquities, and welter in their wickednesse: What is it then? God seeth that men are so sensuall, and that he can not frame them to euerlasting life, and that they accounte it nothing to be banished and excluded the kingdome of heauen? So (saith he) I summon you to appeare before my throne, behold, I will not begin to put in execution my once determined sentence, & pronounce you to vnderstande, that my ruth is from you quite gotten away: I will shew you that they (which for a time possesse them, and shall in the end forgoe them, and that they) their goods, and all their race and posteritie be confounded. So Mary, when we heare all these thinges, ought we not to be moued herby? Howbeit except the Diuel haue altogether bewitched vs, and enchaunted vs? What letteth vs then, but we may frame our liues after a conscience as God requyreth of vs, let euery one shunne hypocrisie in his vocation, let vs not seeke to gaine, and couetously to enrich our selues, let our whole studie be, to passe the time in feare, & in dreade offending God: and albeit we haue no great substance, if we haue but inough to dispende, let vs practise our selues to liberalitie, for a double portion. Loe how we are to behaue our selues in this life, if we desire to be so entertained of GOD, that we may receiue the fruite of his honour? For this must make vs to abhorre all sacrilege and sacrileges. Behold, God hath consecrated to himself tithes: And why? Because he will that we obserue equalitie and vprightnesse one with another: he will also that the gouernors of our life, bee honored among vs, that we possesse them not by lewd practises, that he which hath three or foure, suppresse not the poore of them, as hauing but only the vse of them: and that we be contented with that portion, which God hath giuen vs, as we haue said. Now, if God will that we obserue such an integritie and vprightnesse toward our neighbours, as concerneth our keepe vnto them all the goods they possesse, if these things be hatefull vnto him, how dare we come vnto him, that he will not vse the like rule and measure in dealing by vs, as we haue done, and finally like the rigour that he thought of this matter, so seuerely by many degrees more portion we do then, when we shall haue walked vnduly our neighbours in al integritie, when we shall

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haue sought to geue vnto euery one, that which appertayneth vnto him: let vs render also vnto our God his right, that is to say, let vs glorifie him, let vs take heede that he alwayes remayne in his entire maiestie: and let vs not vsurpe more than he hath permitted vnto vs. As we se howe this rashe boldnesse is in vsen, that when they haue shewed themselues mayde, and furious, in oppressing their neighbours, they will forthwith sharpen their hornes, and arme themselues against God. When they haue spoyled men of their substance, they would also that God should bee subiect to their outrages, and they will not obey him, but when they list, and in that seemeth them good: we must therefore beware of all these thinges. And for conclusion, let vs also take heede, not onely too abstayne from iniurie and harme doing, but withall, not to permitte or suffer, as much as shall lie in vs, that any one bee molested or indamaged. For these are two thinges which God commaundeth vs, Iustice and Iudgement: Iustice, to giue vnto euery one his right: and Iudgement, to the end we be not consenting vnto euill, and suffer not that the poore, which haue no meane to sustaine and vpholde themselues, bee troden vnder feete. For when I shall with mine eyes see one oppressed, and shall not seeke to aide and helpe him, beholde I am consenting to the theefe: so that the sentence of the fifte Psalme may bee verified of mee, When thou sawest a theefe, thou hiddest runne with him. For is not this to runne with them which steale and rabbe, when we seeke not to represse them, or close vppe our eyes not to see them, or geue them the bridle in their neckes to passe further? Wee are consenting to a theft which is committed, and therefore wee must render an account thereof before God, as guiltie of theft. albeit this be nothing esteemed of among men. Let not any therefore thinke, that it is lawfull for him onely to keepe his owne: but let vs consider, that wee must employ our paynes also to conserue and increase the good of our neighbours, as our owne: and so the rule of charitie exhorteth vs. Loe, how we shall not be theeues, neyther before God, nor before men. Loe, how the goodes which he hath put into our handes shalbee blessed of him, when he shall make vs prosper, and that we shall haue such a contentation, that we alwayes aspire vnto, & haue our minds set on our heauenly inheritance, knowing that there we shal haue al fulnesse of riches in perfection. *Psal. 50. 18.*

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our god

God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him to make vs fele them better than wee haue done, and that more and more wee may profite in the obseruing of his holy lawe. And because we are so wicked and peruerse, that all our thoughtes and affections drawe altogether backward, pray wee that it will please him to reforme vs by his holy spirit, & draw vs so neere vnto him, that renouncing the worlde, and despising all earthly and transitory thinges, wee may aspire to his heauenly kingdome, where wee shal haue all contentation and quietnesse. And so let vs say, Almightie God and heauenly father, &c.

The 11. Sermon.

Deut. Chap.

20 Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.

WE haue heeretofore seene, that it is not lawful, after what manner soeuer, to molest and grieue our neighbours, either in their persons, or yet in their goods. But because there is yet an other kinde of hurting by the tongue, God woulde also make mention hereof in his lawe, as wee see in this place. Therefore, as before hee hath forbidden vs, to commit any outrage against our neighbours, which thing he hath comprehended vnder this worde of murder, not to trouble or annoy them in what sort soeuer, or to hurt them in their goods: so here hee sheweth vs, that wee ought to speake no euil of them, that wee must vse no talke which may bee to staine them with any blot of infamie, or any euil and wicked note. True it is, that expressely hee speaketh of bearing false witnesse, but this is, according to the rule we haue before set downe: namely, that he proposeth those thinges, which ought to bee most of al detested: for this end, that wee shoulde abhorre those sinnes, which any way come neere them. If wee therfore speake euill of our neighbours, if wee slaunder them, albeeit this bee accounted no grieuous sinne before men: yet God shal esteeme it as heinous as bearing of false witnesse. But one may make here a question, why God hath in this place spo-

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hen of bearing false witnesse, & of periuries, seeing he hath saide before, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine: for it seemeth hereby, that this is but a superfluous repetition. And in one so little summarie of the law, where there are but ten sentences, to reiterate, and put downe one thing twice, it seemeth not good or conuenient. But we must note for answer hereunto, y the commandement which we haue before expounded, of not taking the name of God in vaine, was in the first table, where God had respect vnto the maiestie of his name, to the ende we might haue it in greater reuerence. Therefore, when we speake of God, let vs consider of the infinite glory which is in him, that we open not our mouth at any time, but in feare and humilitie. So then, be it we are to sweare, be it that we are to speake of God in any manner, wee must alwayes thinke, that his name ought to be had in reuerence, that we must not vse it at random, rashlie, or vnaduisedlie. Thus much then touching that we haue before seene. Now God speaketh of another thing indeede, of not hurting our neighbors, of not doing them any iniurie, or working them any damage, by our wicked tongue. And then, seeing these commandementes are two diuerse ones, take ye how these two sentences are different, and that there is not thing superfluous or more than needeth. Let vs therefore diligently note, that so farforth as it is in this place handled and intreated, how men ought to bee conuersant together in all charitie and vprightnesse, that although the name of God be prophaned in false witnessing: the law notwithstanding is not superfluous, when it is commanded, That we beare no false witnesse against our neighbour. Now in deede in this place he declareth that God would in this cõtinuation generally condemne all detractors, all false reports, all defamations, and such like things. And to shew that this is so, it is said expresse in an other place, Thou shalt not walke about with tales against thy neighbour, thou shalt not speake euill of him to defame him. And if the lawe of God containe a perfect rule of well liuing, it followeth that this is therein compiled. Now where shall wee place it, but vnder this sentence? Wee must therefore conclude, that albeit GOD hath here specified the name of false witnesse, that this notwithstanding, he would extende this doctrine to all detractors, to all false reporters, to all bytales, which tende to the discrediting of our neighbours, or to the hurting of them in their good name and estimation.

Leuit. 19. 16.

We se then howe God woulde here ioyne vs together in loue and frendship, in as much as hee permitteth not any to bee hurt in his good name, no more than in his person, or goods. Wherefore, he which defameth his neighbours, he which slaundereth them, in what maner so euer, as much as in him lieth, maketh as it were warre with God, and breaketh the bond of charitie, which ought to be betweene men: and when we shall haue well considered all, it is certeine, that false reportes, slaunders, & backbiting, do more harme oftentimes, than doe theftes. And so let vs knowe, that if wee will obey GOD, we muſt maintaine the honour and credit of our neighbours as much as shall lie in vs. For when he hath forbidden vs to hurt his good name, he willeth also, on the contrarie side, that wee maintaine the honour and estimation of al. Howe it is not sufficiently maintained in his estate, when we harme it not, except we withal procure the good thereof. Howe: we ought to proceede by the degrées which God woulde here signifie, when he speaketh of false witnesse bearing. The first is therefore, that when wee shall come in to iudgement, we take heede of hurting eyther by any false report, any lying, any slaunderous crying whose honour and good we are bounde to procure. For he which shall beare false witnesse against his neighbour, he slaieth, he robbeth him as much as in him is, and he doeth all the euill which proceedeth from periurie. Thus it is, that offences we shal not thinke horrible, but the thing notwithstanding is so. And this
Deut. 17. 7 is the cause why GOD commaunded in his lawe, that the witnesses should take the first which should laye handes to the execution of him, which was punished for any euill deede, to the end it might be knowen, that by their voices, and by their tongues, they had put him to death, and that the witnesses should be put in greater feare of speaking otherwise than the truth, when euery one should thinke he hath to render an accounte vnto God, if he shall haue bene a witnesse against any. So then, when question is of being a witnesse, euerie one muſt deepely consider of the matter, and take diligent heede hée enlarge not his conscience, but that he speake in pure simplicitie, that which he knoweth to be true before God. And here we are to thinke not onely of false witnessings, which shalbe against the life of a man: but of such also, which concerne their goods and estimation. So then wée are warned in all respectes, to procure the honour and profite of our neighbours, when wée are to beare witnesse: and

yet

yet not so: that vnder this shadowe of couering the iniuries of him which hath offended, we preserue his good name before God. For if the honour of men be more vnto vs, what ought the honour of God to be, if we will make comparison? Therefore to abstaine from malice to beare false witnesse against my neighbour, is in, because God will that there bee loue betweene men, that none be iniurious either in his good name, or in his goods. Now, if God haue so great care and care of vs, which are but poore worthines of the earth, thinke well that in the meane time he will saue himselfe. What if by false witnesse I seeke to beare iniury, and suffer that which hath done euill, if I couer the fault of a blameable life, beleeue it is, that I blaspheme God as much as in me is. And why? For I pretend that I will speake the truth, and in the meane while I commit no sin. Doest thou not thinke to dishonour the name of God? He is not equall to defend his glorie? Doest thou not thinke, that God in this place vnderstandeth gratefully all vices, reuolter the iniquities and wickednesse of men, when he saith, Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour? But he vnderstandeth the like vs, that we ought to serue as well the whole, as procure the good name of our neighbours: for be it, that we be not malicious, spitefull, or enuious, but that we haue a pure and cleare heart, without wicked affection, and without hatred, if we procure and seeke malice, and loue the vices of others, we shall be accounted before God, which reuealeth the secrets of the heart. If I shall goe and blabbe a tale in one eare, to vndoe my neighbour, be a false witnesse. It is true, that I haue not been called before the Iudge, I haue not put my hand to the booke, I haue not sworne by the name of God: yet haue I borne false witnesse before God, who knoweth the secrets of the heart, and therefore beholde how I shall be culpable of so great a fault as I haue said. But now, if I shall attribute vnto vpon no euill will that I beare them, that there is such and such a wickednesse in him, shall I for this be accounted a false witnesse before God? For God hath reuealed perfectly vnto the enimitie and euill will. If then I hate one, and shall vpon this goe about to discredit him by false reportes, if

for the euill will they beare him, I shall seeke to slaunder him, loue, for which I am condemned for a fole with the world. If I doubt with the nature of euill that he hath to defame my neighbour, if this were enough for it me that I endeuour with all my might to staine his credit, behold I am a false witnesse. Marke for what cause it is saide, That charitie and loue couereth a multitude of sinnes, but hatred discouereth a multitude of faultes. See how wel Salomon hath briefly touched in this sentence, what the nature is of euill and wicked tongues, and GOD by nature hath forbidden and condemned namelie, that we should be led hereunto by hatred and enuie. For if we loued one another, without all doubt, we would endeuour to liue together in all loue and friendshippe. We knowe full well, that when we speake euill of one, to hurt his honest name, we can but kindle a fire of displeasure by it, for the maintenance of his credit, must needes be set on to chafe and fret against vs: and then behold, all loue and friendshippe is broken. Moreouer, as long as we shall haue a care to maintaine charitie, we shall couer as much as we may the faultes of our neighbour. But be we all variance: our tongues shall forthwith be euer lauish to speake euill of them, with whom we disagree: and a sound heart is shalbe empoisoned with enuie. For euen as it neuer lacks his vent in the tongue, that the euill will which lurketh within vs, may be set on light for a while: let vs therefore diligentlie note, that GOD in this place hath condemned all slaunders, which proceede from enuie, euill will, or hatred. If peraduenture we could wishe him hanged, or could not be able to hurt him, neither in his person, neither by taking away from him his substance: yet we will seeke to shame him with some malicious scoffe or other: we will endeuour by all the meanes we may, to defame him. Therefore when we beare such hatred against any, this is sure an euill rooted tree, that must needes bring forth like fruits. See what the truth is, whereunto we must come, to the end we may haue the right prouision and regard of this commaundement of GOD. Now withall, let vs note by the way, that when it is saide, That charitie couereth the multitude of sinnes, that this is not so to be taken, that we must flatter one another, and by lying nourish the vices which are in vs: but this is spoken for this purpose, that we should be not forth the faultes of others, as desirous to defame them, whereby we might

Pro. 10. 12.

happilie

happily discourage them, and be the occasion (peraduenture) that they shall abandon all hope, and grow vnwilling euer to vtter impudencie: as vnto vs many vnfortunate persons doe. Let vs note then, that the holie Ghost meaneth not to induce vs flatterers, by allurements of the vices vsed by our neighbours, or to hardē vs likewise, but he will that we endeuour with all our might, to correct and amend the faults which are in them, and yet to that we beare vnfeinable loue vnto them, without opening them to despaire, when they shall vse lewdnesse towards vs. For when a man shall see that one diligently and charitably tried, and that diuerse times, will neuertheless yeeld himself to commit wickednesse, and harden himself therein, and in despite of God and man, permit all their inclemencie, it is a thing vnprofitable, without any affection of charitie, to reprehend them any more. Let vs therefore see as much as we can, that when we reprehend the vices of others, we do it with such affection and gentlenesse, that they vnderstand we reprehend in them our owne. Let vs loue them, we should withdraw them from the way of destruction. And see why S. Iames hath applied this place to them, worthy of gentle corrections, by diuerse and amiable words, rather to gain and allure the neighbours to God. Wherefore, when I shall see one doing a thing displeasant vnto God, I will blame him of his faults, and by admonishing of him, call and bring him into the right way: for (saith he) he shall accomplish, That charitie couereth the multitude of sinnes. I grant that Solomon speaketh here of vice in another sense: but Saint Iames hath not vainly applied this doctrine, signifying, that when we would cause sinners to amend, it must not be by casting vpon them, or by not speaking one word of them. Therefore, when one shall haue offended GOD by vnmeetnesse, we must not dissemble the matter altogether, to couer it by charitie: for this were to practise this doctrine very ill. But we must rather vse gentle and good admonitions, and withall procure, that the vices being buried before God, they be not called to remembrance before men. We must then consider our selues, to haue pitie of our neighbours in mind of their faults, holding alwayes this measure in our reprehensions, that the faults beeing corrected and amended, we desire

Iam. 5, 20.

not

vpon it: for we may easily choose them. To be mute, seeing there is no remedy, or to speak: but we may take heed that we flatter not in dissembling. But this doctrine is easily practised. For as for vs, we erre alwayes in both these extremities, and that the meane is neuer kept: namely, to reproue the vices by a milde & gentle zeale, which we see in others, and also seeke to shew them, & not to remember the offences of them: albeit in such sort that it be not to their reproch and infamy. But what? We seeke the loue and fauour of men, and thinke that shall auaile vs by flattering of them in their sinnes. Also (neighbours) seeing they offende GOD in one thing or other: this is not inough. For we would they should spare vs, so wee will winke at their faults with the like: for we are friendes. Yea, see then a wicked couenant, whereby Satan blindeth the eyes of wretched sinners. For we are the cause hereof, because we dissemble the faultes which ought to be reproued of vs. But yet, as if this euil suffised not, the world at this day is proceeded so farre herein, that men shall be thought true to be good friends with them, with whom we are agreed, except we be conformable vnto all wickednesse for their sakes, & partakers with them which shall offend herein: yea, so farre that they will not sticke to lende their friend a false othe for his commoditie, shall be reputed a good point for their periurie. What (will one say) touching you, that is to hurt my neighbour? Am I not bound vnto him? And wherefore bearest thou enuie against him? How should I doe it? Nay, for that I abhorre the peruerse custruth of God, & how they turne it into a lie, & for that I hate & loue the ordinance and commandement of God, by the which he hath forbidden vs to defame our neighbours. And let vs learne that this is a wicked extreme, into which we fall, when we will beare with that which is euill, when we will nourish and maintaine vices: and aboue all, when called to giue testimonie, and required truly to declare, and to open the wickednesse which is to be amended, we will be culpable therof, and partakers as farre as we may. If I keepe close murder or theft, if I conceale treason, behold I am accounted accessarie vnto all these crimes both before God & before man. Now then this which we haue said, that we ought by charitie to couer the sinnes of our neighbors, this I say hindereth not, but that we may declare the euil we know by them, if it be needfull, and that we shalbe required thereunto: yea, it shall be good for vs so to doe. What there is in this thing an other

vicious

vicious extreme, where in we oft end: when wee are our selues ready ought to blabbe forth those faults, which ought quietly to be amended and corrected by vs, without making any greate proclamation of them: and this shal proceede oftentimes from euill will, oftentimes from ambition, and oftentimes from a foolish desire of vaunting our selues. From euill will (I say) when oftentimes vnder a colour of zeale we will seeme to haue to punish vices, pretending that we can not suffer that God be offended, we come to prie into the life of them whome we hate, and if we finde any thing we may grate vppon, any thing we may snappe them vp for, beholde, wee haue an accusation ready: and thus wee falsly abuse the name of God, protesting our selues zealous men, when we seeke nothing else but to catch our enimies, tripping and falling in some one point of their vnthe. And a man may easily espie our malice in this, that hauing sharpely reproued a vice in some one, whome wee shall haue hated: how will beare with it and hide it, as much as wee may possibly, in some one of our friendes: such an vnequal measure wee will vse. Iudge by this, is it not euident, that there is no good affection in vs, and that we warre not with the sinnes and vices, but with the persons in whome they are? Verily, this cale is cleere and easily to be vnderstood. Let vs therefore learne, that when we are to reprooue the faults and vices lying are in others, that our hearts must be cleare and voide of all euill will, that we may protest before God, that we seeke onely the profit and welfare of him whom we accuse. Loe, one rule to be obserued. And again, we must take heed of al lothly ambition, as I haue touched, that is, that we make not our selues iudges before men, as we see there are some which would make themselues famous in crying out vpon, & rayling vpon others for their faultes. As soone as they shal see any thing amisse, they must by and by charge a Trumpet on it, and all the world must know he is a zealous fellow: and in the meane time, there is nothing in him but a foolish desire to shew himselfe. For this cause God oftentimes will punish such a pryde, in as much as men thinke, that if so they haue sharply reproued others, all they are Saints, and in a manner Angels: and in the meane whyle they dispense with themselues for much wickednes: and when they shall haue offended more grieuously than they whome they haue reprehended, they will (forsooth) that men pardon and forgiue them. And whye? Because they haue reprehended others to the quicke

yea, a man shall se some of these which blushe not to say, What haue not I reprehended euill? And when I haue behaued my selfe so slowly, is it not sufficient? Namely, that when this wickednesse was committed, I reproued it, I would not suffer it. Well, and if thou couldest not any thing tollerate it in others, how wouldest thou that one should suffer it in thee? If thou haddest in thee but one drop of good affection, wouldest thou not hate the vice in thy selfe, as well as in others? So then, when wee shall cry out against our neighbors to reproue them, let vs beware we be void of al ambition, if we will open & discouer the wickednesse wee haue perceiued in another. And let vs obserue this rule. First to beginne with our selues, before we condemne the vices of others, & when we haue diligently sifted & examined what is in vs, then let vs come vnto our neighbors. This is the order we must obserue in our reprehensions, if we will proceede herein according vnto the will of God. And note we, that in generall God hath in this place condemned all iniuries, all slaunders, so that if we doe but open our mouth to speake euill in what sort soeuer of our neighbours, we are condemned as false witnesses before God. But by this is not meant, that we should hide & keepe in all wickednesse which is manifestly knowen: for as we haue heeretofore vnder this colour of couering of sins, we must not nourish & fauour them by flatteries or vices: so we must not vnder this shadow, that we are forbidde to hurt our neighbors by word, say, that black is white: & this is diligently to be noted. For there are some which would haue nothing condemned, what euer it be: yea, they would haue men frame their speech so to colour & disguise things, that if they sin in their owne nature, they should cal it by some other name: they would in no wise, that vices should be condemned by their proper titles. A man shal see this in many: yea, when one shall sharply reproue such wicked liues, as shall not onely haue offended God themselues, but shall be the cause, that priuat, with whom they liue, shalbe drawē vnto a lose and dissolute life, which shalbe as pestilent and infectious sores to rot and corrupt all the rest: when one (I say) shal reproue them, if he touche them, as he ought, to the quicke, incontinently there shall be some of these nice and delicate folowes, to say, O Sir: should you so speake in the pulpit? A man shall se blasphemies to reigne, a man shal se manifest impieties against God and his worde, a man shall se such villanous rebellions, as none more: a man shall se such

enormious and outragious offences, that it is not possible to beare with them, except a man will be a traytour to God. And wel, one shall crie but agaynst these thinges, and ye shall haue this replie made: What? Doeth not the Gospell teach you to winne all the worlde by mildenesse? Hath not Iesus Christ called sinners vnto him in all loue and gentlenesse, pardoning them their trespasses? Must they then which preach the Gospell vse such rigour? Lo, what shalbe sayd: as if Christ would that his grace should be abused, that vices should haue their flote & full saile, that men should dissemble & cloke them, & that they should not be reproued & condemned. Nay, contrariwise, it is saide, that by the Gospell he exerciseth an authoritie & iurisdiction to condemne the whole worlde: & beholde to what purpose this is mainteined, that we should be confounded with shame, & as it were ouerwhelmed with confusion, when our sin shalbe opened & declared to vs; that we haue no other refuge but to his meere grace & onelie mercie. Let vs therefore diligently note, that wee are forbidden to beare our neighbours of hatred & of ilwill. Moreouer all this, on the contrarie side, we are commanded to blame the euill we see in them, and to reproue them with sharpnesse, when they shall vse grossely offende, endeauouring (with all our might (if wee may bee able)) to winne them to bee well: and withall, not ceasing to admertise others, that they be not corrupted by wicked examples. This shalbee better vnderstoode if wee shall take vnderhande the sentence of Iesus Christ, where he saith, Whosoeuer shall haue called his neighbour a foole, shalbe cast into the fire of hell. Whosoeuer shall haue giuen ouerthrowe gainst him, is a detestable and vile thing: and yet the other sinne, that is spoken of here, is sayd, That we must reproue the vnfruitfull workes of darkenesse, that we must detest and abhorre euill: as Saint Paule speaketh likewise also, when he saith vnto the Corinthians, That if the Gospell be preached, as it ought, they which shall heare it, hauing the secretes of their hearts made manifest, shalbe constrained to giue glorie vnto God, casting themselues to the earth, that is to say, being ashamed of their sinnes. And why? Because they are brought to light, whereas before they were hidden, when their sinnes were not knowen: they see that they are detained before God, and there is no talke of hauing themselues any longer. Therefore when a man is accused of euill will against his neighbour, yea, albeit he shall say, that one cannot say, that I haue called him knaue or foole, but shall

Mar. 5. 22.

Eph. 5. 11.

1. Cor. 14. 25.

euelie haue bragged my heeles, or bit my lippes at him. Loe, a falſe witneſſe bearing before God. And why? For I deſpiſe my neighbour. I deſire alſo to put him to reproche and infamie. And what hath ſtirred me hereunto? Some grudge I beare him, ſome euill will I haue conceiued againſt him. Now contrariwiſe, when I will admoniſh my neighbour, ſo that I ſhall ſeeke to doe him good, that I ſhalbe led by no euill affection, but that I woulde procure his ſaluation as farre as lieth in mee, I may ſay. Vnhappie man that thou art, take heed to thy ſelfe, it ſeemeth thou wouldeſt ſell thy ſelf vnto Satan, it ſeemeth thou wouldeſt captiue thy ſelfe vnder his cruell ſeruitude and bondage: thou ſhewest well that thou art paſt all ſenſe, and enraged, when thou wilt receiue no admonition, regard no warning: wilt thou needes periſh miſchieuouſly and miſerably? Goe captiue: thou art horrible to be hated and ſhat at of all men. I may vſe to ſay all theſe words with a man, and yet doe him no iniurie. And why? For I cannot otherwiſe bring him to himſelfe, to attende him. Therfore, when I ſee that Sathan hath ſo hardened him, that I muſt hammer him with great blowes to make him ſenſible, I may here proceede with ſuch vehemencie of ſpeache (my behauiour ſtil ſo ſerue) I muſt ſeeke hereby to couer his faultes. For what other end and purpoſe haue I? What other thing ſhoulde I aſt, but that they ſhould repent of their ſinnes before God, and that before the worlde he ſhould no longer be defamed and made a reproche? It grieueth me that men ſpeake of him ſuch hard ſpeeches, that he is become a reproch and byworde to all: that he is as it were on a ſcaffolde to ſtage expoſed to all iniurie and ſhame. This grieueth me (I ſay) and therfore I ſeeke to bring him vnto the right way, ſo that I vſe no iniurie towardes him, in this maner of proceeding which I obſerue. Now, in the meanes time we muſt take heede, that we laſe not the bridle to any exceſſiue bitternes of reprehending. For albeit we haue a good zeale, & are not moued with any ill will: yet notwithſtanding, we ſhal be very much offended, when we ſhalbe ouer bitter in reproouing. Loe, why ſaint Paule expreſly warneth vs of this, that we reproue with all gentlenes thoſe which haue offended. Conſider, ſaith he, that thou maiſt alſo fall and offend. Let vs therfore vſe ſuch mildnes and gentlenes towardes our neighbours, as we ſhould be vſed towards by the like caſe. But how euer it be, let vs ſpeake of vices ſo, that we diſguiſe them not, to make them ſeeme nothing, & let vs ſeek roughly to reforme them which haue offended:

Mat. 3. 22

Eph. 5. 11.

1. Cor. 14.

Gal. 6. 1.

reproue

reprouing them in such sort, as they are able to beare, and as we see
them disposed: regarding alwayes, that we be moued hereto by cha-
ritie and brotherlie loue. And so, when we shall pray God to conduct
vs in this thing, and to gouerne vs by his holie spirit, a man shal not
be able to count it an iniurie done to him, whe we shal haue told him
of his faultes roundly, and yet charitably. Se ie then what we haue
to obserue touching this commandement: namely, that we must not
open our mouth to speake one word slanderously, and maliciously,
against our neighbour: and yet in the meane time, that we reprooue
simplie and plainly, such as shall haue offended, as we would men
should haue a care to correct and amend vs in the like case. Why we
shall vse such equitie and vprightnes dealing: beholde, we shall not be
alwaies voyde of faultes, howsoeuer it be. Note, that when mention is made
here of falshood, not onely forbidden is to lye and inuent a lie,
in such sort, that what we shal say, be altogether deuised of
our owne braine: but if we maliciously depraue that which is in
deede: for example, we heare here take witnesse. As it is said, that they
which depraued our Lordes words, that he said, Destroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raise it vp again, were
false witnesses, and yet in deede that was Iesus Christ had spoken: Mat. 26. 60.
that is to say, had pronounced these words touching his body.
They then which settle themselues, why are they called false witnesses?
Because, vnder the name they forged the words of the same of God
into another sense than he had spoken them: and so ought to be
how much more charging him falsely, to haue vttered a reproche as if he
should haue spoken of the materiall temple of Hierusalem, when he spake of his
owne body, which was the true temple, in the which dwelt all the ful-
nesse of the Godhead: for he was God manifested in the flesh. Do 1. Tim. 3. 16.
then, we see that the falshoode which God here condemneth, is not
then only committed, when we contriue a lie, and tell that which
neuer came into our heart to thinke, or we deuise a tale neuer knowen or heard
of before: but then also, when we shal haue maliciously disguised and
altered a matter which might be well interpreted, turning it to an
euill sense, when it might be wel meant: and herein we be false wit-
nesses and examples. There are some so wayward and ouerthwart,
that as soone as they perceiue any thing which displeaseth them, al-
beit it haue no euill at all in it, neither against God, neither against
man, yet are they readie to make an accusation thereof, and to say, D

se such a man hath spoken or done such a thing, so that a man shall not have given. I know not what the smallest blot that may be, but that which was a vertue shalbe taken for a vice. So then, when we shall have inuented and deuised for our onely word, that which hath neuer been done or spoken: loe, we charge a man with euill, we hurt his good name, & harme him in his reputation. Let vs therfore note that we are false witnesses, not only whē we forge & inuent that which hath neuer bene done or spoken: but when by any subtile cauil, by any euill & sinister interpretation, we shal turne that to euil which might have bene wel taken. Now as I have said, this is oftentimes done, when men are too reprehensiue & ouer captious, when they are wayward & frowardly bent: for then will they turne all to ill. It is said, That charitie is not suspicious (as S. Paule hath spoken hereof) and 1. Cor. 13. 5.
that we must know the euil before we condemne it. It is verie true, that we may be often times deceiued in iudging of that which is good, and that which is euil: but when there shalbe such figures and markes, that the things shalbe so manifest, that we may be bold to say: Here is such a thing, yet if we be ouermuch bent to snatch at it, we may offend. And seeing al, that we have so peruerse a nature, we had need to be ware of our selues, for we know not what, knowing we that we are condemned as false witnesses before God. Now if those which are some occasion giuen, have the wit them selues hardie & bold in remembring: are yet to be condemned, because they have proceeded ouer rashly: what shall be said of them, which of purpose & deliberatly will peruert that which hath bin done or spoken, which ought not with standing to have bene wel taken, & wherein there shalbe no manifest vice? If they will peruert & depraue it by their ill & wicked handling, are they not false witnesses before God? So then, let vs learne, so to procure the honest & profit of our neighbors, that alwayes we have a regard vnto it in our talking. Be it that we reprehend them be it that we speake of their vices to the end they may be punished for them, & that therewith which might be scoured & led vnto euill by their wicked example, be not peruerted: let vs neuer theless alwayes have this regard, to procure their profite & welfare as much as in vs lieth. And let vs alwayes obserue this measure in reprouing that for we blame not men in such sort, that they be wholy discouraged to return to doe well. For we ought rather to hate their vices as much as we may, both before God & before men, that they may cal to minde their duti, & not lose all shame to giue ouer themselues inordinately vnto

all

all wicked vtterance. Thus yee see in what sort we ought to procure their good. Now, if we will as we ought, obserue this which is here contained, we must come to an higher point & principle: namely, to consider why God hath made our tong, & for what cause he hath bestowed on vs ỹ gift of speaking, knowing he hath granted it vs to this end, that we might communicate together. Now the communication which is betweene man & man, what other end ought it to haue, than to maintain vs in charity? Wherefore we must therefore warely learne, to bridle our tongues, that the vnitie & peace which God commandeth that we haue amõg vs, be alwayes kept & nourished as much as is possible. And to why S. James vseth such vehemency when he mentioneth euil speaches: he saith that the tongue which is but a mal portion of the body, is a little more of flesh, & notwithstanding having such a fire, can kindle the greatest & thickest woods in the world. Let vs therefore returne to this principle namely, to know that God hath bestowed on vs a singular benefite, in giuing vs the meanes to be able to cõmun & conferre together of the thoughts & affections of our harts secret & hidden, & the tongue which vttereth & displaieth the secrets of the hart. Let vs therefore consider diligently how to vse such a great a benefite, let vs beware how we defile our tong with filthinesses & wickednes, hating God which giueth it to nourish a fame & brotherhod among vs: let vs take heed we abuse it not to babbles & pratle of this & that, so as to turne our speaches to ill purpose, to be enpoisoned one against another. Behold what is the point where to all we must come. Now seing we haue diligently noted how we shal vse this mean of being faithfull witnesses, because this is an vnpacient sin to bridle our tongues, let vs trauail therein with so much the greater diligence. Alwayes how many ill speaches shall escape vs, & wherin we haue spoken at rouers, without weighing what we say, because we are so accustomed hereto. Yea & we must also note how we are by nature inclined to speake vnaduisedly, to reproch & backbite our neighbours, the more paines we must take to represse, and bridle our tongues. For if we be giuen to any sin, this inclination & accustomed euil vse shal not serue vs for an excuse before God. Why, when we shall perceiue any vice to bee in vs, we must be so farre off from flattering our selues herein, that we ought to sigh and say: Alas, I see this vice reigneth ouer much in mee, I must therefore more manfully warre against it, and force my selfe, through the grace of my GOD, so farre as to represse in

John. 13. 6.

in vs, that thing which I lie God commaundeth. And to be the more
herefull in this thing, let vs thinke on the menace and threat he gaue
against it. For when Saint Paule saith, That neither fornicatours,
1. Cor. 6. 10. nor drunkards, nor extortioners, nor murderers, shall inherite the
kingdom of heauen, & numbreth also among them, railers, euil speak-
ers, banishing them in like maner from all hope of euerlasting life
and saluation: when we heare this, is there any talke to be had of co-
uering vs with leaues, to make our selues beleue there is no yll done,
when we shall haue slaundered our neighbours? Thinke we that the
threat which God hath pronounced by the mouth of Saint Paule, is
onely to scape little children, and that it shall not be executed vppon
them, if they would exempt themselues from it in despite of him? So
then let vs labour with all our diligence, to obserue this commande-
ment. And aboue all (that our matter may conclude herewith) let vs make
this comparison, that if God will that the good name of our neigh-
bours be kept and cleane as deare vs vs, and if he so straightly forbid
vs all detractions and slaunders, craftily wrought, disgrace and discre-
dite him, how ought we to behaue our selues toward vs him? Are we
not all bounde and tyed vnto God vs to maintaine the honour of God?
And howsoeuer we endeuour our selues any way, we ought much more
to be bounde hereunto, than to conserue in his entire estate the honour of
men? Now then if the leaste worde of being false toward God, as
1. Cor. 15. 15. S. Paule saith, That they which corrupt the worde of the Gos-
pel, are false witnesses against God, how ought we to be
[illegible] to the truth of God, that we corrupt him not
by our false opinions, or vanity and trayterie: but when we shall see
a good order, that we will receiue and sustaine it, knowing that God ap-
proueth vs as his seruaunts and ministers. Seeing then it is thus
beloued vnto vs, that we ought not suffer [illegible] in vs
[illegible]. Now to the end, that God may be glorified in vs, that
we may be reputed, and become his true people: And this ought to
be obserued, especially when the questions concerning the doctrine
of saluation, and that when we shall see that this doctrine shall be falsi-
fied, & that new deuises shall be brought in, to corrupt others
with their false abuses and lying, we must here shew when it shall
be [illegible] to suffer false doctrines against God, to haue their course:
except we will be consenting vnto them, and partakers of their iniq-
uities, as I haue already declared. Now let vs learne, that when

[illegible]

we shal haue liued with men in such simplicitie, that a man shal not be able to charge vs, that by backbitings, lies, or slaunders, we haue discredited any one: we must also haue this zeale towards GOD, that his trueth remaine in his entire and perfect estate, and that it be mainteined so, that it may reigne and beare rule among vs. We see in effect what we haue to consider vpon this commaundement.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, that we may be led further and further vnto suche a repentance, as we may learne to consider of our vices, to be sorie for them, and to be displeased with our selues, to the end, that hauing obteined forgiuenesse of them, we may learne to order our life after his commandementes, that he may be honoured of vs in all true obedience, and not onlie by confession of mouth. That it will please him to graunt his grace not onelie vnto vs, but to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

The 12. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

21 Thou shalt not couet thy neighbours wife, neither shalt thou desire thy neighbours house, nor his fielde, nor his manseruant, nor his maide, nor his oxe, nor his asse, nor any thing that is his.

It might seeme at the first sight, that this commaundement is superfluous, because that God hauing condemned theft and adulterie, would there also represse all wicked concupiscences and desires. For we haue saide, that these commaundementes must bee expounded of vs, according to the nature of God. And we knowe, that the proper office of God is, to sounde our hearts, that he onelie knoweth the thoughtes which are secret and hid:

bid, and therefore it followeth, that when God forbiddeth men to bee theeues and adulterers, he would bridle their affections and desires. And in verie deede if this were not, God should haue no more power in making and prescribing of lawes than mortal men. For an earthlie man, if he condemne adulterie, he will also condemne the act and deede thereof: yea, if an euill intent and meaning appeare, it shall be punished. If the lawe of God were such, it should import no great thing. For it should be but a policie, that is, a rule of order to gouerne vs honestlie before men. But there is in it much more. As we
1. Tim. 1. 5. see that S. Paule saieth, That the law cannot bee kept and obserued without a pure conscience and a faith vnfeigned. If it be then required, that we haue such a soundnesse for to obserue rightlie, and as we ought, the lawe of God: it followeth, that vnder the name of adulterie, al wicked lustes and desires are forbidden, and so likewise vnder the name of theft. Wee might also alledge to this purpose the authoritie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is a faithfull interpreter of the lawe. For it is by his spirite that Moses and all the Prophets haue spoken. Why then is it now added, that we must not couet or desire? If mention hath bene alreadie made of all wicked desires, was there any neede that this should be againe repeated? Wee must therefore note for answere hereunto, that God in this place would not represse such wicked affections and desires as are alreadie resolute and concluded vpon of vs, but those affections which do first pricke and stirre vs vp, albeit we cleaue not, nor consent vnto them. This requireth a more ample and familiar expolition. Sometimes to couet, importeth the will which is in a man, as when I shal cast mine eye on the goodes of my neighbour, if I shall be tempted to couetousnesse, and that I nourish such a temptation in me, and giue my selfe the bridle: for sinne hath wonne so much, that I haue a resolute will in me, that I could wish well that this should be mine. Loe then one kind of desire which importeth withall a will, when a man shal consent vnto sinne, and if hee had the meane, he would put in practise his wicked will and purpose which he hath conceiued. Now such wicked desires haue bene alreadie forbidden, when it hath bene said, Thou shalt not steale: Thou shalt not commit adulterie. For God hath not only forbidden the act of fornication & stealing, but to desire and lust after either the wife of an other, or his goods & substaunce. But there are other desires and lustes, to the which we cleaue not at all, to consent vn-

to.

to them, which oftentimes tickle and stirre vs vp, and wee perceiue some motion in vs which is against God, and is rebellious to the integritie and vprightnes which is contained in the law, and such desires are forbidden in this place. So wee see, that God, not without cause, hauing condemned al euill desires and affections, annexeth, that this is not yet such a perfection as he requireth: but wee must know that euery affection which stirreth vs vp vnto euil, albeit wee conclude not any thing within our selues, neither rest our selues on it, that if only a concupiscence forceably breake forth in vs, and wee strine therewith, that this is a sinne committed: we are culpable before God. And thus wee see what integritie is required in this place when our Lord hauing forbidde wicked desires, adioineth that both our senses and minds must be locked vp in such sort vnder his feare, and inflamed with such a loue and desire, to walke in all holinesse, that we be not moued or driue either on one side or other by any wicked passion, to desire either the good or the wife of another. Now seeing we haue the intent and meaning of God, let vs diligently consider wher vnto he bindeth vs. For the law ought to serue vs for a looking glasse, to behold the pouertie and miserie which is in vs: and after that we shal haue vnderstood what our dutie is, let vs know that we are to be condemned, if we come not neere that perfection, to the which God hath called vs. We see wher vpon we must stay to make our profite of this last commaundement of the lawe. And to the end that we may be so much the more attentiue, and that we may know that this is a doctrine which requireth, that we apply our whole studies therein, let vs beare in mind that which S. Paule saith, That being reputed a great and exceeding wise Doctor, hauing bin nourished in the law of God from his infancie, yet was he so blind, that he vnderstoode not what the lawe of God ment, vntill he was conuerted, and that our Lorde Jesus Christ had enlightened him by his Gospel, to the end he might knowe whither the law of God ought to lead vs. *Phil. 3. 5.*

Beholde then Saint Paule, who was instructed in such sorte, that hee was in great reputation among men, not among the Paynims, to say, that he was some great Philosopher: but hee was taught and brought vp in the lawe of GOD. And touching his life, hee protesteth, that he was irreprehensible, and without all fault before men: Loe, I say Saint Paule,

an holy and learned personage after the common estimation of men, but yet a poore beast touching the law of God. And why? He saith, he esteemed himselfe living, & that he thought himselfe iust before God, and knew not that he had neede of the mercy which GOD offereth vnto al sinners. For he abstained from theft, frō fornication, & such like things: hee had no wicked desires in him which one might perceiue, and which might be knowen vnto men, so that he iustified himselfe in his owne fantasie. Now in the end, when God had taken pitie on him, he opened his eyes, & made him to vnderstand that which is conteined in this last commandement, Thou shalt not couet. Behold how S. Paul began now first to vnderstand the lawe, in which before he was a doctor, making profession thereof, wherein hee had bene taught and instructed from his first age. Vntil hee had well considered and meditated of this, he tript ouer the quiche coles, hee learned his lesson (as we say) by rote, he neuer talked nor vnderstood the force and power of the lawe, he neuer knewe that this was sinne, to condemne himselfe before God, and to haue his refuge to his mercy, in the which the hope of our saluation lieth, and whereupon it ought to be grounded. Seeing then S. Paul knew not the lawe, and had no right vnderstanding thereof, but by this worde: let vs labour herein with so much the more diligence: and seeing that all the tyme of his life, vntil his conuersion, he was so blind, that he vnderstood not this worde: by so much the more ought wee to bee attentiue in this place, for we are of no greater abilitie than hee: but God by his holy spirit must reueale to vs what this concupiscence is, which hee hath in this place condemned. Now beyond all this, we must haue an other admonition which is very needful and necessarie for vs. For the Diuel hath sought in such sort to cover and hide this precept, that a man should not know the intent and meaning of God, but that one should lightly content himself, to condemne onely those euill concupiscences for sinne, which appeared manifestly, and wherof a man were plainly conuicted. So that many haue restrained this worde of concupiscence to those euill affections and desires, which impote a resolute will and full consent. Now this is against the natural sense and meaning of Moses: and yet is this a doctrine fully concluded on in scripture. Although the Papistes cannot deny, that to be pricked and prouoked with an euil & wicked desire, is a damnable vice, and which proceedeth from original sinne, and from this corruption

which

which we drawe from our father Adam: yet they imagine that after baptisme this is no more a sinne. As if such a fantasie come into the minde of man, to doubt the promises of God, to murmure against him, to bee angry with him: when a man shalbe afflicted, if it come into his fantasie to accuse God of iniustice and cruelty, this is not a sinne, say the Papists. Neither are these of the rudest & ignorantest sort among them which speake thus, but this is a general resolution & doctrine vniuersally concluded on in al their diuelish Synagogues. There is not a Synagogue among thē, where this hath not bene retained as an article of faith: namely, that a man being prouoked and stirred vp with some wicked desire, sinneth not, that if he be tempted in himselfe to commit murther, to empoyson any, to commit fornication, and briefly, to be guiltie of al the crimes and enormities in the world: if so that he consent and assent not thereto, (for loe the words which they vse) that is to say, if hee resolue not himselfe heerein, to say, I wil put in practise my wicked conceit, and that hee stay not himselfe hereon to please himselfe in this wicked affection, al this is no sinne. This is, say they, but to exercise vs in combate and fight against sinne, and we then declare that we are valiant champions, & that sinne beareth not rule ouer vs, or reigneth in vs. Now I graut it is true, that the faithful thewe well that the spirit of God reigneth in them, when they repel and beate backe such temptations, when they bridle and captiue themselues so, when they resist & withstande such things, knowing that they are contrary vnto God, and that hee condemneth them. It is certaine that hereby it is shewed, that God hath giuen vs victorie ouer sinne, and that the vertue and power of his spirit abideth in vs, and that we are stout and valiant Champions to bid battell against Sathan. But this is not to say, that we are exempted and freed from al fault, and that we may so plucke out of vs all sinne, and ransome our selues so fully, as if it might not staine and spot vs no longer. Alas, we are farre wide from this. For on the one side it is true, that we haue great cause to praise God, that he bestoweth this grace on vs by his holy spirit, to surmount & ouercome all wicked affections. But in the meane time, wee ought to bewaile our selues, knowing that we are on our part ouerweake, and that if he take not pitie on vs, forasmuch as we haue within vs an euil and wicked conscience, which is to prouoke his vengeaunce against vs, we should wel deserue to be throwen downe of him into the bottom-

lesse pit of hel. But let vs note how God woulde heere open and discouer the shame and reproche of the Papists, & how he would shewe that the greatest Clerkes among them, are more rude and ignorant than the poore vnbelæuers which neuer heard one worde of the holy scripture. And why? For let vs consider of that which is contayned in the lawe. It is said, that the summe of the lawe is, That we loue God with al our heart, with al our minde, with all our vnderstanding, with all the faculties and powers we haue. If it were saide, Thou shalt loue God with al thine heart, a man might with some colour conclude, that there is no sinne, but when the will is certaine and resolute. For the hearte in the Scripture, although it signifie sometime the vnderstanding, yet is it taken for the will. Now then, one might vse this cauil: It is said, That we must loue God with al our heart, if so be then our will be not contrary, well, it is ynough, we haue quited our selues before God. For one might happily refraine the will from consenting to this wicked affection, and so it should seeme that the wicked desires which first incite and stirre vs vp, and yet hold vs not captiues, be not comprised vnder sinne. But God addeth, With all thy heart, with all thy vnderstanding and thoughtes, and with all thy powers.

Deu. 6, 5. Mat. 22. 37.

Let vs now consider, if I conceiue any thing against God, if I conceiue any euil lust or desire of fornication or stealing, albeit I cleaue not at al vnto it, whether one part of my soule & vnderstanding bee not already corrupted, and whether I loue God with all my heart, when one parte of my vnderstanding is bent against him? There is no question of the heart, but of this apprehension and conceiuing of the minde, which is in the soule of man. Nowe I shewe well that there is vanitie in this, that the feare of God withholdeth me not as it ought. It followeth then, that I am culpable and condemned, because I discharge not my selfe in louing GOD, as hee hath commaunded me. And againe, is there not some vertue and power of my soule which applieth not it selfe to thinke on this or that, which is contrary vnto GOD and his iustice? So then, wee see that euill and wicked thoughtes are condemned, and that wee cannot so excuse them, but that GOD shal worthily punishe vs for them. And let vs knowe, that albeeit men neuer consent vnto euill, to haue their will resolutely bent thereunto: yet cease they not to bee accursed before GOD, if hee woulde vse his seueritie against them.

Now

Nowe therefore wee haue the true sense and meaning, and wee see withall, that wee must take diligent heede to this place, that we bee not seduced and abused herein. And the example of Saint Paule ought to pricke vs forwarde so much the more, seeing that he confesseth that hee was ignorannt of the lawe of GOD, vntill our Lorde Iesus Christ had enlightened him by his holy spirite, to the ende hee might knowe what this worde of concupiscence imported. It remaineth that we now applie this which hath bene touched to our vse and profite.

In the first place therefore let vs learne, that to serue God well, and as we ought, we must not onelie desire to doe well, neither is it sufficient that we profit herein, and proceede effectually: but we must purge our selues of all euill and wicked affections, and of all corrupt thoughts, in such sort, that al our senses & vnderstanding tend to this ende, to giue ouer our selues fullie & wholie vnto God, that we may shew we haue not bene so distracted, as to bende on one side or other: but that wee bee holde vp so streight, as to runne without being hindered or staied: yea, to runne in that way, which God sheweth vs, so that there bee in vs nothing, but all puritie: and when we shall haue well and throughlie vnderstood this, wee shalbe aduertised to bee watchfull, and to stande on our garde. For wee see howe men wander, and leade them selues astray. And what is the cause hereof? Because they reckon (as wee say) without their host. For they expounde the lawe of GOD after their owne fantie, and they thinke it sufficient, if their will bee not wicked, and that they rest not them selues on their euill thoughtes. Well, God will not impute this vnto vs, say they: and hereyppon they walke on in their wicked concupiscences, and they haue an headbande which they put before their eyes, that they might not knowe howe closely they deceiue them selues. Now when men speake thus, yet this will not serue them to escape the hande of the heauenlie Iudge. Let vs therefore take diligent heede, we restraine our selues in our concupiscences For God hath not onelie condemned wicked intentes and purposes, but al desires also, which prouoke vs to euil, and driue vs thereunto. Let vs therefore walke in so much the greater feare, let euerie one holde himselfe, as it were vnder lock, forasmuch as there is no part in vs, which is not infected with sinne. For let vs examine all the fault of our soules, and we shal finde sinne dispersed ouer all:

as

as when a poison hath entred the bodie of a man, so that euerie part thereof is infected. There is in vs such an vniuersall leprosie, as possesseth both the bones and the marrowe, the thoughts and the affections, and all which is in vs. Seeing then it is so, that our nature is thus corrupted, ought wee not to be so much the more vigilant and watchful to hold our selues in bridle, seeing God by the law hath condemned all wicked thoughts, which tend to incite vs vnto euill, seeing hee hath condemned the smallest motion which flattereth & tickleth vs, and when we onelie feele our will a little pricked and stirred, albeit it be not at all held captiue? When we see this (I saie) haue we not great occasion to awaken vs to walke vnder the hand of God, in so much the greater heedefulnesse? So then behold howe this precept ought to awaken vs, when wee are so sleepie and slouthfull, and would so easilie acquite our selues of our duetie towardes God. But let vs knowe, that no such shiftes will serue vs to escape. And why? God followeth on alwayes to condemne wicked desires, hauing condemned wicked counsels and purposes. Nowe this doctrine ought to serue two wayes to our vse and profite. First, it may teach vs more feruently to pray vnto God to gouerne vs by his holy spirite, and to purge vs from all our corruptions and vices. And again, hauing made our request and prayer vnto him, that euery one force himselfe, that we vse violence with our nature, with al our senses and appetites, seeing there is in vs suche a rebellion against the law of God. As S. Paule also speaketh not onelie of the wils of men, when he saith, That through their peruerse and crooked nature, they *Rom. 8. 7.* are enemies vnto God: but he mentioneth the affections & thoughts, for he vseth a word in that place which signifieth the thoughts which we conceiue. Seeing it is so, let vs knowe, that when we shall haue bestowed our labour inel, to hold our selues snaffled with the bridle of God, that yet some euil desires shal escape vs, for which we ought to lament and bewaile our selues before God. Loe what the first vse of this doctrine is: namelie, that we haue this zeale to call vpon God to gouerne vs by his holie spirite, and that we employ all our paines herein, and vse such force with our selues to be retained from al euil, that Sathan haue not his entrance into our hearts, that he may not make any breach into vs, to winne possession of our bodies: but that we keepe him aloofe and farre off. And as soone as we shall perceiue any thought in vs, which shall tende vnto euill, let vs come forth to

oppose

oppose our selues against it, let vs make this barre: to say, We will
God must beare rule whole in thee, he must possesse not onelie thy
minde, but all thy senses & thoughts. For the second, we must learne
to condemne our selues, & giue al glorie vnto God, in confessing that
we are all culpable & guiltie, and that if he call vs to account, & shall
vse seueritie with vs, loe we al perish and are cast downe to the bot-
tomlesse pitte of hell. Then must come vnto this point, otherwise we
shall not profite in the lawe of God, as we ought. But here a man
may demaund, seeing that God knoweth the frailtie and weakenesse
of men. Why he either strengtheneth not them better, or why he ma-
keth a lawe so straite and so austere? For it seemeth that God woulde
oppresse vs, when he forbidden wicked desires, and that he is not
content that we render him obedience in our wils, enioyning vs no
further thing by adding this worde. And loe why these scoffers say,
That God woulde spite and anger men in his lawe, and as it were for-
bid them to scratch themselues when they itch. But we must come to
knowe this miserie and wretchednesse which is in vs: namely, that
we haue neither thoughtes nor affections, which are not rebellious
vnto God. Let vs not therefore marueil if there be such a strife and
combate betweene the lawe of God, and our lustes and appetites.
And why? For when we haue diligently sifted and examined what
foode is within vs, we shal finde there is nothing but all manner
of corruption and damnable wickednesse. For we cannot conceiue
one onely thought which tendeth not vnto euill. Seeing it is so
with vs, and that God hath giuen vs a perfect rule of all goodnesse
and vprightliuing, hath he not as it were thundered against vs?
Now is it not manifest, that the fire and the water are at lesse strife,
yea, agree better, than the nature of men, and the iustice of God?
Let vs not therefore thinke it straunge, that God hath so repressed
our appetites and lustes: and when we heare the blasphemies which
these scoffers spue forth, let vs detest them as monsters. For in
steade of glorifying of GOD in his iustice, they sting themselues
and spurne against him, as sauage and furious beastes. Loe what
we haue to note touching the frailtie and weakenesse of men: that
albeit it be so great: yet he condemneth it in his lawe. Now why?
For when GOD ouereth our life, and chalenge vs howe we are
to liue, he hath not respect what we can doe: but he requireth
rightly of that we owe him, he requireth that vprightnesse and in-

nocencie of liuing is, though it be not found in vs. We are the creatures of GOD: ought we not then to giue ouer our selues wholie to his seruice? Without all doubt we ought: for this is a peremptorie reason: and can not be gainesaide. And men may well mutter and murmure hereat, yet shall they alwayes be conuicted with so manifest a proufe, that hauing their beeing of GOD, and for him, they ought to dedicate vnto him all their senses and affections, and whatsoeuer there is either in their bodie or their soule. Howe withall let vs note diligently, that we can not acquite vs of our duetie towardes him. But where is the cause hereof, but in our owne nature? But this we drawe from Adam: It followeth not, for that we are held captiues vnder sinne, and that this cursed seruitude and bondage hindereth vs from doing well, and maketh vs giue our selues altogether vnto that which is euill, what euer other cause be hereof, the cause is in vs, and euerie one shall beare himselfe culpable. And we must not say, that we are driuen hereunto by anie externall force, but euerie one is leade and drawen vnto this by his owne proper concupiscence, and so there remaineth no excuse for vs. And hereby we see that we must not measure the law of God by our owne faculties and powers. And whye? God respecteth not what we can doe, or what our power and abilitie is: but he respecteth howe farre we are bound vnto him, he respecteth this integritie and perfection, which is without vs. Behold what we haue to obserue. And this is that which abuseth and deceiueth the papistes. For they haue this principle among them, That the law of God is not impossible vnto men. It is wonderful howe they haue bin so mad, howe the deuil hath inchanted and bewitched them in such sort. For this doctrine is most cleare and manifest throughout all the holie scripture: namely, that men shall be alwayes condemned by the laiwe, and must alwayes haue recourse to the meere grace and mercie of God. When Saint Paul will proue that men are accursed being sinners, and that there is not at all one iust man, what argument or reason is it which he vseth? He alledgeth the place of Moses: Cursed is euerie man that continueth not in all thinges which are written in the booke of the law to doe them. Now it might seeme at first sight, that Saint Paule hath euill argued, and that this reason is impertinent. For let it be granted, that all they which haue transgressed the laiwe of God, are accursed: yet it followeth not, that all mankinde be cursed. For if one

1 Iam. 1. 13

Gal. 3. 10.

If one man obserue the lawe, and acquite himselfe herein: loe he is exempted out of this condemnation. Some then shalbe found which shal haue obserued the law of God, and therefore all are not cursed. But Saint Paule presupposeth that the law is impossible, and if he had not take this as graunted, he might seeme to haue proceeded in his argument without sense or reason. Thus we see that the Papists haue taken and grounded themselues vpon a principle and grounde, altogether contrary to the spirite of God: yea, they are so rude and ignorant, that they haue not yet learned and vnderstood the A B C of faith, and of Christian religion. So then, let vs diligently note, that when question is of the lawe of God, we must not measure it by our strength and power, to respect what we are able to doe: but wee must consider what we owe vnto God. Yea, but what then shall be the meane to deliuer vs from the curse of the lawe? For it seemeth vnto them, that all the world must needes be damned. I graunt it well, & it behoueth it bee so, that is, that we be all damned, if we will haue saluation in Christ Iesus. For how shall wee seeke vnto the grace and mercie of God, except we know the want and need we haue thereof? Men would not seeme beggers by their good will. But as long as we shal thinke anie iustice to be in vs, we shall neuer haue any cause to seeke it elsewhere than in our selues, and therefore we must bee wholy rid of all opinion of our owne vertues, we must perceiue the wrath of God which is bent against vs, we must feele the weight and burthen of death, which lieth on and presseth vs. For without this, it cannot be that we shalbe able to prepare our selues to obtein mercie at the hand of God. But this thing requireth a more large and ample declaration. Let vs therefore first of all beare in minde, that when wee feele anie euill thought to arise in vs, and that our appetites and lusts, with any pleasant motion, shall tickle and stirre vs vp vnto euill, that wee bee culpable and also guiltie of sinne before GOD. But here one may demande this question, Whether, if when a man conceiueth a wicked thought, and he bee so farre from resting on it, that hee detesteth it before hee feele any pricke and prouocation thereof, whether this bee sinne? As there are very many thoughtes, which touche not our hearte, which moue vs not at all, which ingender and breede no wicked lust in vs: yea, a man may haue some thought arise, hating as

it were hatefull hope: and wel, this sitteth from him without mouing the heart, or drawing anie lust after it: and yet for this we must lament and bewayle our selues before God, and knowe, that except GOD stayed vs by his grace, we haue opened the doore to Satan, whereat entring in, he might incontinently winne vs vnto further wickednesse. Wee must therefore be sorie for this thing, albeit God imputeth it not vnto vs for sinne. But there is nowe a second degree, when not onely we conceiue some wicked thing in our minde, moued hereunto by some present obiect: but when we shalbe thereby something moued, that we shal feele some pricke of Satan, which stirreth vs, then is sinne conceiued, that is to say, although there be no consent giuen: and albeit the will be not resolute herein, yet is sinne forgiuen before God, and it is damnable in his sight. For to haue this better vnderstood, we must alledge examples hereof. It may so happen, that a man beholding eyther the house or the lande of an other, conceiueth some flying fantasie, and yet his hearte is nothing moued herewith, he hath no such desire bredde in him as to say, I would this were mine: but he passeth from this thought, and seeth it is but a vanitie: he coulde not withstande it from arising in him.

But albeit there be not herein any wicked affection and desire, yet notwithstanding, GOD doth hereby warne vs of our infirmitie and weakenesse. And wee must here vppon humble and bewayle our selues, and acknowledge that this is alreadie a sinne, for which we were to be condemned. For let vs consider whether this shall bee founde in the Angels of heauen. It is most certayne it shal not bee sinne in them. And yet the iustice and righteousnesse of Angels, shal hardly suffice to satisfie and answeare the lawe of GOD. True it is, that there is in God an other iustice, as we haue seene in the booke of Iob, which surpasseth and exceedeth this of the lawe: but if the Angels of heauen applie themselues to fulfill the lawe of GOD, without doubt it is al they are able to doe, to conforme themselues to the rule which heereheere prescribeth vs. We se then, that this is a vice, for which men ought to condemne themselues: not when they shall haue hadde anie occasion offered, whereby some wicked affection might arise: but when they shall haue bredde in them suche a desire, as to say, I coulde

with this, that although a man incontinently repelleth the motion of fire, and stayeth nothing at all upon it, yet is he culpable of this concupiscence which is here mentioned. Now, seeing this is so, let us learne altogether to condemne our selues: and againe, let us be ware we fal not into a double condemnation, when we shal not only haue coueted something to prouoke vs vnto euil, but shall haue nourished this desire: as when a woman hath conceiued, shee nourisheth her childe vntill she bring him forth: so when wee shall haue loosed the bridle to our wicked lusts and desires, so farre, as that our will be wonne, in so much that we rest our selues on wickednesse, to giue our full consent thereunto, behold how we incurre a double condemnation: and then must we vnto more and greater torments be vnder our miseries, wee (I say) haue brought these condemnations vpon our heades, except God of his infinite mercy and goodnesse haue pitie on vs. For, what we haue here to note touching euil concupiscence, is this. Seeing we are subiect to the like, we must returne to consider of the same: for we were in a desperate case, as being vtterly condemned, if we had not that grace and mercie of God, whereby we are succoured and relieued. Therefore, when we shall haue humbled and abased our selues in all the feare that may be, before God, calling to mind the worthy vse, that of these so many euils we are guiltie which are in vs, although in their owne nature they are sinne: yet will he not impute any of them vnto vs for sinne. As then a wicked desire deputed sinne in the ciuil law. But these kinds of things are to be considered, for if we respect the nature of the vice, it is alwayes sinne. What verily is more vnreasonable, then that the whole, or all and euery one of the members should rebell against the head? as by this wicked desire we do, and by the same we are conuicted before God. Let vs learne also, that by the blood of Iesus Christ, all our spottes and blemishes are wiped out: and baptisme is heere set for a sure testimonie and witnesse vnto vs. For by it we are washed from all the filthy and polluted workes which are in vs, that we might appeare pure and cleane in the sight of God: which we are, those sinnes and deadly stames which are daily committed, shall not be imputed vnto vs, because (as I haue said) that God hath buried our sinne, and will not regard it: but we must notwithstanding haue respect vnto it, and be more diligently ware of offence. But if any delude and deceiue themselues, to be perswaded, they conceiue no wic-

hee vnfolded, this shal occasion God to cal them to their account. And to bee (I say) when men flatter themselues, they must needs bee condemned. And loe why the Diuell hath so much endeuoured to blinde the eyes of men, in making them beleeue that none of al these things are sinne: yea, we see how the Papists think that the grossest faults that may be, are soone wiped out with one signe of the crosse, or with one Asperges of holy water. They thinke these things are nothing, and they flout themselues with God, as with some little childe. But let vs contrariwise remember, that when wee shall not onely slugge in sinne, but shalbee greatly inclined to flatter our selues in our vices: let vs (I say) remember to take vnto vs this glasse of the law, and to behold our selues in, that we abuse not, nor deceiue our selues. A mã may haue his face foule and dirtie, euery one shall mocke him, & yet he shal se nothing thereon, but when he looketh in a glasse, & seeth all his face soyled, then hee washeth himselfe, and goeth and washeth it: so haue we nede here to do. It is true, that the whole law of God is as a glasse, to shewe vs our filthinesse, that wee might bee confounded and ashamed of our wickednesse: but wee must haue to consider of that condition a most cleere and bright glasse. If wee reade this onely, Thou shalt not steale, Thou shalt not bee a murderer, nor adulterer, euerie one will make him selfe beleeue, that he is guiltie in nothing: but when wee come to this commaundement, Thou shalt not couet, loe GOD soundeth not onelie the depth of our heart, but all our thoughtes and imaginations: there is no thing which hee trieth not and examineth: and those thinges which wee shall account for no faultes, shalbee condemned before GOD, and he shall bee Iudge of them, if wee on our parts will not iudge them. Now, in the meane time wee are to magnifie the mercy of our God, that when wee are so manie wayes culpable, hee yet receiueth vs as iust and righteous. Let vs compare together the iustice wee obtaine by the meanes of faith, and the malediction which is on vs, wherein wee are plunged. Is it wee culpable before GOD of one offence, of three, of any number? My father, are wee not plunged into such bottomlesse gulfes, that when wee shall beginne to make our account, we shalbe ouerwhelmed and confounded with the multitude of our offences? An hundred millians of faultes are the hundred part of them which wee haue committed in the sight

[illegible] GOD, [illegible] righteous in [illegible] that [illegible] and
the measure in our [illegible] But [illegible] GOD receiueth [illegible]
to merite, that [illegible] shall [illegible] as if there were
vs all integritie and perfection, and that [illegible] nothyng [illegible]
filling the whole lawe. Wherefore, when [illegible] giueth vs the
gift of faith, whereby [illegible] and [illegible] of the
and therein, which [illegible] by the [illegible]
of our Lorde Iesus Christ, [illegible] vs his [illegible]
to say: Lorde, it is inthy [illegible] that our
saluation consisteth: when GOD (they) pardoneth vs such an
infinite number of sinnes and offences, and notwithstanding [illegible]
satisfie else: [illegible] but [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
mountaines, if GOD [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
are beaten to the ground, he helpeth [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]

Lam. 3. 24.

Rom. 6. 12.

The 12. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

22 These are the woordes, which the Lorde spake vnto all your multitude in the mount, out of the middest of the fire, the cloude, and the darkenesse, with a great voice, and added nothing thereto: and wrote them vppon twoo tables of stone, and deliuered them vnto me.

BEcause wee finde no better excuse for our lose behauiour, or for our rebellion against God, than to alledge ignorance, we could bee very well content to haue alwayes this cloke and couerture, to say, that we vnderstãd not those things which God speaketh vnto vs, or that he directeth not his talke vnto vs, or that his voice is vnto vs so terrible, that we dare not heare it. But God perceiuing such a vaine excuse to be forged, hath sought to preuent all that which men might alledge for their rebellions, to the end they might no longer haue any excuse for their iniquities. And therefore when he published his lawe, see why he would that the doctrine therein contained, should be pronounced with an high and mighty voice, and that it should bee spoken in the eares, not of three or foure onely, but in the hearing of all the people, both of the least and greatest, briefly, of all without exception. Againe he would that the lawe should be written, that it might continue, and serue for the vse, not only of one age: but that euẽ to the end of the worlde it might haue his force and vigor, his rule & authoritie. Loe, wherein this place it is saide, That God spake with an high and mighty voice, whereby Moses giueth vs to vnderstande, that the lawe is no such secrete and hidden doctrine, that any one neede to alledge, that he is not so great a scholer as to vnderstande it. For God, not without great cause, hath so exalted his voice, when he would prescribe a rule for ordering of the life of men. And he ordained it of purpose, that the Lorde spake vnto all the multitude assembled, and to the whole people. True it is that God hath chosen some among you to be your gouer-

nours, and hath giuen them of his spirite, yet will hée that his lawe be knowen of the most rudest and ignorantest, that it may be a common willedome vnto them all: that is one of the points we haue hære to note. The second is, that God had added nothing after these ten sentences or sayings: Whereby Moses admonisheth the people, that they be quicke and wortheie, as God dieth ought to encourage them, to receiue what he shall speake. For hee propoſeth to them no greate volumes, which might occasion vs to reply, that al our life would be to litle to studie them. God therfore hath not bene ouer long, when he deliuered his worde, he hath instructed vs in ten woordes, and no more: count wee them on our fingers, and wee shall haue instruction touching al that which is required for the well ordering of our life. Withal, Moses hereby would haue vs vnderstand, that seeing God hath giuen vs so certaine a rule, and that himselfe woulde adde nothing whatsoeuer, to that which he had saide, that we ought to holde our selues content therwith, and that it is not lawefull for the creatures, to adiopne any thing there vnto. And this is the seconde point that ought to be noted. For the third point he addeth again in this place, that whereof he had before spoken namelie, that God when hee published his lawe, shake out of the midſt of the cloude, that the mount smoked, that there were flames of fire, that the lightenings flewe abroade. And whervnto tendeth al this? Euen to this end, that the doctrine of God might haue the greater maiestie, and that men might be inuited to humble themselues in all reuerence before GOD, to subiect themselues fullie and wholie vnto his worde, and to yeelde all dutifull obedience vnto it. Loe then three notable pointes recited here by Moses, before hee proceedeth to the rest which followeth. Nowe touching the first, let vs beare in minde, that which hath bene touched namelie, that GOD hath spoken with an high and cleare voice, and that not to one handfull and small assemblie of men, but in generall vnto all the people, and that this is for no other end, but that wee might knowe, that the worde of God shall sounde lowde and shrill enough in our eares, for vs to heare and vnderstand it, except wee will wilfullie play the deafe men, and stop our eares at it. I graunt all our senses are so weake, that wee shall neuer bee able to comprehend one worde of that which God speaketh vnto vs, except he inlighten vs by his holy spirite. For the naturall man per-

1. Cor. 2. 14.

ceiueth

eeiueth not the thinges which are of God: they are to high and too deepe for vs. But whereof commeth this default and blindnesse, but from our owne corruption and wickednesse? For it is most certeine and true, that the veritie & truth of God in it selfe, and in his owne nature is easie enough, and plaine to bee vnderstood. Let vs not then alledge, that it is too darke and obscure. But howe must we behaue our selues to profite therby? If wee will that God make vs to profite in his worde, let vs bee humble, and obedient, and little in our owne eyes. For it is not for naught that he promiseth to teach and instruct such as are humble. Let vs not then trust vnto our owne wit. Let vs not come to the hearing of his worde with such an hautinesse and presumption in vs, as to thinke we are of sufficient capacitie to iudge of that which shalbe saide: but rather let vs desire of God, that he will open our eyes, that he will reach vs out his hand to leade vs, and let vs confesse, that wee are not of such dexteritie of wit, to profit vnder him in his schole, except he bestowe it on vs. When this humilitie shalbe in vs, doubt wee not but the worde of God shalbe easie vnto vs, and that wee shall knowe, and vnderstand, whatsoeuer is there deliuered vnto vs. Hereby wee see what miserie and wretchednesse hath bene heretofore in the worlde, that the common people, and in a maner all, haue forestalled, and euen withdrawen them selues from being taught by the holie scripture. For they thought this belonged only to the Monkes and Priestes. And in the end suche a foolishe and beastlie opinion was conceiued, that men thought all diuinitie ought to be cloistered in their dennes and cabins. So was all this, this sacrilegious Simonie hath alwayes remained, and must endure to the end of the worlde, that God hath spoken with a lowde voice, that he hath not hid, or drawen him selfe back into some little angle and corner of the earth. So this hath bin a most wicked vnthankfulnesse in men, that they haue left the worde of God as cleane cast off & forsaken of all. And so much the more detestable ought we to note this place, wherein it is said that God directeth not his speech only to some great Doctours, but hath communicated his voice to the whole people, euen to the most simple & least among them. And withall let vs, to whome God hath restored his worde, praise & magnifie him for so inestimable a benefite, whereof the greatest part of the worlde haue depriued themselues by their owne malice and retcheles negligence. Let vs, I say, praise and extoll his goodnesse, that his worde at this day

showeth in our eares, that we may reade it, that all both priuatelie and publikelie may be partakers thereof, that this heauenlie treasure is laide open vnto vs to vse and to enioy it. Beholde an inestimable benefite, & about all, he bestoweth on vs, for which we ought to magnifie our God, as preeing this benefite about all the rest. Howsoeuer, let vs be attentiue to heare our GOD speake. Let none allege here any excuse to exempt him self from this dutie. For seeing that GOD speaketh to the whole companie of the faithfull, to all them which are baptized in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, let euery one in his degree and calling applie his studie to profite in the word of GOD: and let vs all in generall take God for our maister, and let vs be readie to heare him alwayes, and as often as it shall please him to speake vnto vs, as he ceaseth not dailie to doe. And thus much be noted touching the first point: wherein it is saide, that GOD hath spoken to the whole multitude and assemblie. Nowe let vs come vnto the seconde point we noted: namelie, that he added nothing. And this is saide, that we might with better courage heare that which is contained in the Lawe. It is certes, that all that which Moses hath written, appertaineth to the lawe, all that likewise which the Prophetes haue left in writing: finallie, whatsoeuer hath been added in the Gospell, all this (I say) conteineth one substaunce of doctrine, and the Bible is sigge enough: but yet, because we should not neede to wander farre, or make any greate inquirie after that, whereunto we ought to leere, GOD hath proposed vs one certeine scope and marke at which in ordering our whole life we might ayme, and shoote at. For all is referred to these ten sentences, as I haue saide. Let vs then but count ouer our fingers, and we shal haue the tenne commaundementes of GOD, all is concluded in a fewe sentence, which we ought to beare in minde, to be good scholers vnder GOD. Therefore when God vseth such breuitie, are not men to be wicked and vntoward, if they refuse such a doctrine, if they will not for all this be at so much leasure, as to profite in the feare of GOD? Nowe therefore let vs laye aside all such vaine and friuolous replies, to say: O, the holie scripture is a deepe sea, it is a bottomlesse pit, a man enter into it, which way shall he be able to get forth. Let vs alledge no such thinges. It is true, that God sheweth in the holie scripture, that which the Angels

1. Pet. 1. 12.

desire

desire to behold. It is true, that we can haue but some smal tast therof, while we dwel in the worlde. It is sufficient, that wee knowe in part, as Saint Paule speaketh, and in darkenesse, beholding as it were in a glasse, that which we can not see as yet face to face. All this is verie true: yet so is it not withstanding, that God hath so conformed and abased himselfe vnto our rudenesse and slendernesse, that these thinges are easie vnto vs, or at the least wee shalbe able to vnderstand so much, as is profitable for our saluation. If with all there be things doubtful and obscure, let this sobriety be in vs, that we advaunce not our owne iudgements, but that we first aske counsell at the mouth of God, knowing that we are yet far from our perfection. And yet, according to the measure which he hath giuen vs, wee may alwaies glorie in this, that our Lord Iesus Christ will not leaue vs in doubtfulnes and ignorante, but that he wil giue vs so sure and certeine a way, as wherin we shalbe able to walke with great assurance knowing that he hath not called vs in vaine vnto himselfe, when we shall not haue any vncerteine, and wandering course to runne, but so certaine a marke proposed, as whereunto if we shal direct our race we shall not neede to feare any erring, as destitute of some good guiding and direction. Let vs therefore beare in minde, that our Lorde hath not spoken according to his own nature. For if he would speake in his owne language, should he be vnderstood of mortall creatures? Alas no. But how speaketh he vnto vs in the holy scripture? Verily he lispeth and stutteth for our better vnderstanding. Saint Paule saith, that he became as a nource of little children, when he preached the Gospell. Now when he spake it of himselfe, there is no doubt, but that he would shewe vs thereby the goodnesse of God, which so gouerned him by his holy spirit. And this which is in Saint Paule, we shall finde likewise in Moses, & in all the Prophets. Let vs then diligently note, that God is made as it were a nource, which will not speake vnto her infant, as she would vnto a man, but will haue respect vnto the capacitie of it. So God abaseth him selfe, forasmuch as we could not vnderstand what he saide, except he submitted himselfe to our vnderstanding. Loe for what cause he is like a nource in the holy scripture, that men might not perceiue his greate and infinite maiestie, vnto the whiche wee cannot come, nor approche any thing neere vnto it. Seeing GOD hath beene so gentle vnto

1. Cor. 13. 12.

1. The. 2. 7.

us, as to open himselfe vnto vs in most familiar manner, so much more grieuous a condemnation shall fall vpon our heades, if we bestowe not paine to profite in that doctrine which hee hath, as I may so say, shewed vnto vs, that there resteth nothing for vs to doe, but to swallowe it and digest it.

Let vs therefore note, that when Moses saith, That God added nothing to these tenne sentences, it is to this ende, that we should shewe our selues more easie to bee taught, and bee the more encouraged, knowing that God will not make vs to wander, and take endlesse labour, as in a thing which hath neither banke nor bottome: but hee proposeth vnto vs onelie ten sentences. True it is, that he hath expounded these ten Commandements by Moses. And againe, consequently by the Prophets. Lastlie, we haue had the finall declaration of them by our Lorde Iesus Christe, as it is at this day deliuered vs in the Gospell. But what? Wee haue yet this marke, whereunto we must alwaies order our selues. Wee haue but ten wordes for our lesson, and seeing it is so, ought wee not to iudge our selues very frowarde and peruerse, if wee despise so great grace of God, and if wee come not vnto him, when hee handleth vs after so gentle a manner? This wee haue then briefly to beare in minde of this easinesse and plainenesse which Moses sheweth vs to bee in the worde of God. And withall let vs also note, that he would hereby warne vs, that we learne to content our selues with the simplicitie of the lawe, that wee auaile our selues howe we come to controule GOD, to cloute our patches and peeces to his worde. For when hee spake, hee spake once for all, and will that men holde themselues to that he hath said. As we shall see hereafter, how he hath streightly forbidden vs to bende either to the right hande, or to the left, or to adde any thing to his doctrine. And in verie deede seeing GOD hath adioyned nothing thereto, who are wee, to enterprise and take in hande any thing aboue him? Thinke wee, that when God deliuered his lawe, he had lost his memorie, and knew not what was profitable for vs? Can a man bethinke himselfe of that which hath been vnknowne vnto GOD? And againe, beside all this, when our Lorde hath so applied himselfe vnto vs, thinke wee hee would instruct vs by halfes, and leaue vs in the middest of the way? Let vs therefore beare in minde, that seeing GOD having pronoun-

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ced these tenne sentences, added nothing vnto them: wee must so wholie applie and rest our selues simplie on that doctrine which is contained in his lawe, that wee venture not to enterlace any thing of our owne whatsoeuer: but let vs knowe, that this is our perfect wisedome, to bee obedient vnto our GOD. If this had beene in all times well obserued, we should not haue bene at this day so incumbered, to amende the corruptions which reigne throughout the worlde. For, from whence commeth it, that men haue corrupted all religion, and the seruice of GOD, as wee see it is come to passe in Poperie? The Papistes will vaunt and boast themselues of seruing GOD, when they shall haue their solemnities, their ceremonies, and other like trash. And whence is this? Euen from this, that they haue presumed to adde some thing to the worde of GOD, when they thought it not sufficient, that GOD should be serued after his owne manner and fashion: but men must reare vp some newe deuises in their braines, and fantie whatsoeuer they should thinke good. So then, all this which they call the seruice of God in Poperie, is nothing els but a fardel of trumperies, which men haue made vp together, and not onely this, but that which hath beene spoken by the Prophet, hath bene accomplished in them: namely, That they haue despised and set at naught the commaundementes of GOD, while they haue bene geuen to their owne inuentions. And men see the wickednesse and mischiefe which is happened by this diuelishe boldnesse and presumption, when men haue gone about to disguise the woorde of GOD by their lyes, and dreames, and dotages. So much the more diligentlie therefore ought wee to note this place, when it is saide, That GOD haning once spoken, added nothing to that which he had said. And in very deede, as I haue already said, this is an horrible blasphemie, when men wil attempt to finde out, I know not what, some thing better than that which is contayned in the lawe of GOD. This were to reproue him of a lye, or to thinke that hee was not well aduised, or happilie that hee forgat to geue in commaundement that which he ought. And shal men finde out some thing better than hee? Nay verilie. Then let vs learne to order our selues in such sorte vnto God, that wee haue this alwayes imprinted in memorie, that God hauing spoken, he made a full ende and conclusiō, to say, These are my limits & borders, whosoeuer wil

Esay. 29. 13.

presume

presume to goe beyond, shall but venture further to breake his necke. And in deede it can not otherwise be, but a ruine and destruction shal followe vpon vs, when wee will not keepe vs in that high way, which God hath made, and hedged in for vs. Nowe, albeit GOD speake not at this time in so visible manner, as he did then to the people of Israel: yet ought wee often to call to minde this lesson, which is contained in the lawe. True it is, that God hath not spoken twice, but hee hath spoken once for all, as wee say: but wee on our part must againe and againe call it to minde, as it is also saide in the Psalme. The Lord hath spoken once, I haue heard him twice. *Psal. 62. 10.* For hereby wee are admonished, that it shall not suffice to haue vnderstoode for one day that which our Lord wil haue pronounced and published in his name: but wee must often and sundrie times meditate thereupon. Let euerie one therefore exercise himselfe heerein all the time of his life, and let vs not cease euening and morning, to call this to minde, and to consider wel that which our Lord sheweth vs. For when wee haue employed all the time of our life herein, we shal hardly come so farre as the midde way. True it is (as wee haue alreadie said) that euen at the first entrie God teacheth vs so much as is expedient to be knowen for our saluation. But yet for al this, we shall alwayes finde wherein to make our further profite in the word of GOD. Let vs therefore be diligent, and let vs not thinke it is labour lost, which we bestowe herein: no, not when we apply our studie day by day heerein, and shall not giue ouer to searche and inquire after that which God teacheth vs. Beholde in what sorte wee must apply this to our vse, and practise it: wherein it is said that our Lorde hath added nothing.

Now let vs come to the third point, which is, that God spake out of the middest of the fire of the cloude, and of the whirlewind. It is true that this hath beene before expounded alreadie: but seeing it is repeated againe vnto vs by Moses, let vs note that it is not anything superfluous. And in very deede, wee cannot be too often put in minde hereof, that the worde of God ought to beare a greate maiestie with vs, to humble vs vnder it, that wee may yelde all subiection and obedience thereunto. And why? First we see what pride and arrogancie is in men, that they can hardly stoope and bend their nekes to be pliable in such sorte as they ought. I graunt, as may shall not heare them say plainely and in expresse wordes,

they

they will resist God, and make open war with him. But what euer they protest herein, are they so tractable to be taught, so humble and modest as were requisite they should be? Nay, they are farre wide from this. Againe, there is in vs suche a dulnesse and vnsensiblenesse, that being so nousled, as we are, in these earthlie things, and so charmed in them, wee can not raise vp our vnderstanding to hearken vnto GOD, we can not come neere this spirituall wisedome, forasmuch as our mindes are so possessed with the cares of this worlde, wee nede not anie thing to make vs rest our mindes here belowe on the earth. It is therfore verie needfull and necessarie, that our Lorde touche vs to the quicke, to the ende we may beare suche a reuerence vnto his worde, as that it die not altogether in vs: partlie by our rebellion, partlie by our stupiditie and dulnesse, that is to say: because we are so lumpish, so earthlie, so grosse and worldlie minded: and partlie, for that we are alreadie fraughted with so manie vanities, that we neuer minde suche thinges as are on high, but lying still groueling on the grounde, we are belde occupied in these transitorie and corruptible thinges. Therefore, GOD (not without cause) spake out of the middest of the fire, and of the cloudes, and whirle windes, when he would publishe his lawe. For it behoued, that the people should vs touched with some great feare, to say: There is no talke of sporting our selues with God, when he appeareth vnto vs so terrible, and in such maiestie: what resteth then, but that wee tremble vnder him, and shewe him such subiection, that he gouerne vs as his sheepe, that we all bende our neckes, that we stoope with our head suffering him to order vs to his will, that euerie one giue him selfe wholie thereto, and that we be all confounded, when he speaketh, and haue no other affection and desire in vs, but to serue and honour him, and to subiect our selues altogether to his guiding and direction. Loe, why God hath so magnified his lawe, when it was first published. He might well haue spoken without casting out flames of fire, without making the mountaine to smoke, without hauing so darke and obscure a cloude: but hee would vse these miracles, that the people shoulde tremble, being stroken with an exceeding great feare. And therefore let vs note, that hee would hereby leade vs vnto that, which the Prophete Esaie speaketh, That his spirit shall not rest, but vpon them which tremble at his worde. For this is the thing wherein he will prooue *Esa.66.5.*

our obedience to our God, namelie, that when he speaketh, we receiue his worde without anie contradiction or gainesaying: whatsoeuer he shall say, that we accompt it good for vs, and agree thereunto, and say, Amen: not onelie with the mouth, but also with the heart, that in our whole life we serue & obey him. For this is the seruice which GOD requireth, and wherewith he will be honoured: namelie, that we declare what obedience we beare vnto his worde. But because we are herein so harde and so heaule, that rather wee drawe cleane backwarde, than bende the necke to carrie his yoke, it is needefull that wee be ayded and set forwarde by such meanes as are here mentioned. And therefore, let vs note, that this flame of fire appeared not then to serue and profit them onelie, which saw it: but that at this day the lawe of God shall by this testimonie, written & authorized, and made authentike: and that the remembrance hereof should remaine so freshe in our memorie, that when we shal cal to mind this which happened for one time, we be humbled vnder the mightie of our God, and that when we would proudly and presumptuouslie lift vp our selues against him, this fire which then burned to feare the people, the thicke & darke cloude like wise come before our eyes, that we remember also, howbe the mount was seene to burne, & that all this may be to holde vs in such a feare and awe, that all foolishnesse and hautinesse of ours be beaten down, that we may be ready vs to come and present our selues to our God, to be led by him whither he will, and that we may followe, most willinglie, whithersoeuer we shalbe called of him. Now is then whereunto we must referre this which is here touched, of the lightning, of the flame of fire, & of the thicke cloude. And withall, let vs note, that when God appeares in a whirlewinde, and in an obscure and darke cloud, this was to represse and keepe downe the curiositie of men. It is true (as we haue alreadie touched) that GOD speaketh to be vnderstood, that he vseth no doubtfull and ambiguous wordes, that he letteth no long circumstances (as we say) but manifestly and openly his will to vs, truelie and plainlie, that the faute shalbe no where but in vs, if we be not perfectlie instructed therein, if wee will but lende our eares to heare him. But in the meane time, wee must not bring with vs such a foolishe curiositie, as to inquire, beyonde measure, of what wee list: as wee se men inclined to such a foolishe ambition, that their eares are allwayes itching, and they will say, I would

know

knowe this, and that, we seeke, beholde how our Lorde God ap-
poseth him selfe contrarie to, and saieth, Wilt you knowe this, and
that? Loe, a thicke cloude which hindereth your vnderstan-
ding of this ob-
scuritie and darkenesse which you se. So let vs learne, that if wee
will bee good scholers vnder God, wee must not loose the bridle to
our owne fantasies, to be inquisitiue after that which ought to be hid-
den frō vs: but let vs content our selues with that which shalbe spo-
ken vnto vs in the name of God, and let vs waite for that day, wher-
in we shall haue a ful manifestation of the rest which is now incom-
prehensible: briefly, let vs be ignorant of that which God will not
declare vs. For this ignorance surmounteth all the knowledge and
wisedome of the world: namely, when we desire to knowe no more,
than our Lord permitted & graunted vnto vs. Now let vs come vnto
that which Moses addeth: he saith, That the law was written vp
two tables of stone, & that it was deliuered to him. When mention
is made of two tables, we must call to minde that which hath beene
said & handled heretofore: that is: that God could well haue written
the whole law in one stone, but he would write it in two, that this
distinctiō being made, we might so much the better comprehend that
which is contained in the law. For we se, our Lorde hath for the nee-
ded those thinges for vs, which are there contained, that we might not
alledge that he speaketh in to high a language for vs to vnderstande.
For as much as there are two principal points in our life, our Lorde
hath diuided his law into two tables: namely, that we might know,
how we ought to gouerne our selues towards him: & how we are
to liue & to be conuersant with our neighbours. Will a man order
his life in all perfection? It behoueth first that he giue himselfe to the
seruice of God, that he knowe what God requireth and approueth:
and after this, wee must liue in such vprightnesse and equitie with
our neighbours, that we shewe hereby, that we are the true children
of God. First therfore we must know how God wilbe honoured and
worshiped of vs. Secondly, we must render to our neighbours that
which appertaineth to them: obseruing this indifferency of nature,
not to do to another, which we would not haue done to vs. So God
hath declared in two tables, in what sorte hee will be serued of vs:
as wee haue aboue declared, that he proposeth him selfe onely to
be worshipped, that we should forge no newe Gods. Againe, hee
hath declared, that he wil not be represented by images nor moppets

that he is a Spirit, and will be spiritually worshipped of vs, and not as men shall fansie to serue him by the [illegible] of worshippe: but he will be serued in spirit. Againe, hee will haue his name sanctified, he will that men exercise themselues in his worde: and aboue all, that euery one withdraw his selfe from his owne thoughtes and affections, that we reste vs to be ruled and gouerned onely by GOD. And this is contained in the first table of the lawe. Touching the second, we haue seene howe hee commaundeth vs to obay father and mother, howe hee forbiddeth vs murders, aduulteries, theftes, euill speakings, all wicked lustes and concupiscences. See ye then, why GOD hath diuided his lawe into two tables. Will we therefore order our life well, and as wee ought? Let vs first learne to honour GOD, and after that, to liue with our neighbours in all integritie and vprightnesse. For there are some, which will abstaine from iniuring of others: but in the meane while, they haue litle regard of GOD: and they thinke they are quited and absolued, if so be none inuite them, nor complaine of them in this worlde. But (I pray you) what shal this be, not to bee theeues, if wee commit sacrilege? Is it not a greater and more enormous crime, to robbe GOD of his honour, than to spoile a man of his goods, to cutte his purse, or to picke his chest? So let vs not thinke wee haue fulle discharged our dueties, when men shal sue no processe, nor make any complaint against vs: for God must also haue that hee requireth, and is due vnto him: for we are bounde to bee him homage all our life time. Wee must therefore bestowe so much the more studie to obserue the first table of the lawe, that we leade not a Philosophicall life, as did some of the Paynims, to liue honestly and vprightly with men: but let vs haue in greatest price and estimation, the honour of GOD, and let vs beginne first of all at this point. Nowe againe, there are some which woulde seeme very deuoute towardes GOD, as hauing some great zeale to serue and honour him: but when they bee conuersant with men, they fall to pilling and spoyling, and beating of them, they are full of crueltie, of enuie, and malice. But let vs note, that GOD hath not separated the two Tables of the lawe: hee hath made a distinction of them: but hee hath not giuen to some the first table of the lawe, and to others the seconde table. He hath said: Behold my lawe, and that which I haue ioyned together, must not be seuered, but must remaine vnseparable.

It is true, that you ought to be learned to followe that charitie which you owe to your neighbours: but yet, when you haue discharged your duties in one point, you muſt conforme your ſelues vnto the other: and you muſt not rethleſly neglect to walke in all equitie and vprightneſſe, when you ſhal haue ſhewed ſome great deuotion of honouring and ſeruing of mee. There are alſo manie, which will ſerue God: but how? As their owne blinde deuotion ſhall teache them: as doe the Papiſts. But God meant to bridle vs herein, when hee gaue vnto vs the firſt table of his law, that we might learne to ſerue him as he commandeth, and that we accept of nothing as good, which hee approueth and liketh not. See then whereunto this appertaineth, which is ſaid, That God wrote his law in two tables of ſtone, to the end it might remaine and continue. For it hath not bene giuen to remaine for a certaine time, it is not tranſitorie. I graunt that the ceremonies haue an end, as this is a reaſon, why the lawe is called temporal, for as much as this order which had bene eſtabliſhed among the auncient people, to endure vntill the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, was then taken away and abolished, ſ the thinges were perfect: ſo that we are no longer vnder theſe figures and ſhadowes of the law, which ſerued for that time. But the truth ſ ſubſtance of the lawe was not to remain for one age, but it is a thing which endureth, and ſhall neuer ceaſſe or haue end. Let vs therefore learne, that God in ſuch ſort publiſhed his will, when the people came out of the lande of Egypt, that he ſpake in the mount of Sinai, that withal hee deliuered vnto vs there an order which we ſhoulde obſerue, ſ ſo prouided, that his doctrine ſhoulde alwayes haue his full force and vigor. And for this cauſe he hath written his law in two tables of ſtone. He hath not written it in barke, as at that time the maner was, or as we might now lay in paper, or in parchment: but he would that it ſhould be engrauen in ſtone, that there might be a memoriall thereof to endure, to the end we ſhould be confirmed in this which he hath ſpoken. For he was not contented to haue ſpoken for one time but hauing engrauen his lawe in ſtone, he would we ſhoulde haue attentiue eares to receiue it al the time of our life. Now withal let vs note, that it is true that it ſerued to no great purpoſe, that the law of God ſhould be ingraued in ſtone, if this were all. What is then further required? We muſt know that the doctrine of God propoſed vnto vs, is indeed neceſſarie ſ profitable for vs, but yet that it ſhould ſerue vs to ſmall

purpose, except God should adde thereto a seconde grace: namely that this which hee hath pronounced, should be imprinted in our hearts and inward partes. Therefore, as God with his finger, that is by his diuine power, hath writte his law in two stones, so must he now by his holie spirite write it in our heartes, which are of stone, & full of hardnesse: as the Prophete declareth, when hee saieth, That God shall giue vs heartes of flesh, which shall bee soft, pliable, and apt to be taught, and to receiue whatsoeuer hee shal command vs. Exe. 11. 19.

So then, seeing God hath visibly declared, that it is hee which must write the lawe, to haue it wel knowne and vnderstoode, let vs make our request, that it will please him, by the vertue and power of his holy spirite, to write it at this day in vs, that we may holde it within vs, and that howe soeuer the Diuell labour herein, he may neuer wipe it out of our remembrance. Nowe withall Moyses concludeth, that the lawe was deliuered vnto him, to conserue, and to keepe it, and to bee also the minister and dispenser of it to the people, that hee might bee acknowledged of them for a Prophet, for otherwise hee coulde not haue executed his office, hee coulde not haue edified the Churche of GOD, except men had knowne that this charge was committed vnto him. As at this time, if we were not persuaded that GOD would that his Gospel shoulde bee preached by the mouth of men, that there shoulde bee pastours in the Church to carie abrode his worde, which of vs would daine or bouchsafe to heare a minister? I am not, nor any creature liuing, of such dignitie, as that I might persuade the worlde to receiue what I say. But when I speake here in the name of God, that men hearken to his doctrine, to rule and order themselues thereto, and to doe him homage: beholde, this is of more force than all the lawes, than all the statutes, than all the edictes of Kings and Emperours. Hath a mortall man done this? No. But when we know that God would that this policie and rule of order should be in his Churche and that men should inuiolably obserue it, that is: that there bee Pastours which may beare his worde abrode, which may be expounders of it, which may be as his messengers to announce and declare the remission of sins in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, which may reprehend, which may reproue, which may comfort and exhort, when (I say) we vnderstand that god would such a regiment should be in his church, then are we ashamed to resist and withstand him, which hath

formed

formed and created vs. Loe why Moses in this place saieth, that God deliuered him the lawe. It is true, that God deliuered it to all the people in generall, as we haue said. Why then is Moses now the onelie possessor of it? It seemeth that God would depriue the whole worlde of it, and that Moses onely were priuileged therein, as if the lawe were written for him, and al other (as it were) excluded and shut out from it. But this is nothing so. And yet, albeit the lawe was giuen for the whole people, Moses is appointed the garder and protector of it. And this which God hath pronounced of him, we must extend further, as we see the Prophetes were appointed in the selfe same charge: namely, that they were as stewardes and dispensers of the treasure of saluation, of this couenaunt of God, and that this office was giuen vnto them, alwayes to declare the will of GOD, and to preach it vnto vs in his name. And this is the generall rule which Saint Paule hath deliuered, That men ought to esteeme vs as the ministers of God, and dispensers of the secretes which he hath sent the worlde. Now, when Saint Paule saith, That we are disposers of the secretes of GOD, he sheweth hereby, that it is not enough that we haue the holie Scripture, that euerie one reade it in his house: but it is further required, that it be preached vnto vs, that we retein among vs this order, to be taught by the mouth of men, that there be pastours and teachers, whose ministerie God vseth, to the end that when we shall heare them, we may profit more and more in the doctrine of saluation. And this is the cause why Saint Paul in an other place saith, That the Church is the piller of truth, and as it were the safegard and towre thereof. The Papists alledge this verie foolishly, to yeeld vnto themselues a licentious libertie of making newe articles of faith, and of establishing lawes after their owne fansie: for Saint Paule hath vnderstood the cleane contrarie. He saith therefore, That the Church is the piller and sure prop of the truth of God: because that when GOD published his trueth vnto men by the lawe, by the Prophetes, and the Apostles, hee would that this ministerie should indure and bee perpetuall: that is, that there should bee some deputed and appointed to this office and charge, to expounde his worde, to edifie the Churche in this sort. Let vs therefore knowe, that it is by meanes of the Churche, that the trueth remaineth in his perfect and entire estate. For when GOD raiseth vp men, which are indued with his spirite, to confirme

1. Cor. 4. 1

1. Tim. 3. 13.

frute vs in the faith, to enlighten vs, and to shewe vs the right way. Loe how the trueth of God remaineth vnto the worlds, how it is not extinguished, howe it perisheth not. Let vs then note, that Moses meant not here to make himselfe the onelie possessour of the lawe, to exclude the people from it, and to thrust them out of doores: but he speaketh as thus vnto them: Welbeloued, it is verie true, that the lawe is common vnto vs all, wee are all the children of God, I challenge nothing vnto my selfe above you: yet for all this, if I will discharge my dutie in the office wherein God hath appointed mee, I must be a faithfull expositor of the lawe to you, I must be the keeper of it, that you tread it not vnder foote, I must put you in mind of it euerie day, that you neuer forget it. Seeing then it is so, let all them which are here appointed ministers of the worde of God, take heede they be preest and readie to serue and minister vnto the ignorant: and let all consider, that it is not enough to read the holie Scriptures, but we must be diligent to profite therein, and to come with all humilitie to heare them, which are ordeined ministers of the worde, to deliuer vnto vs the meaning and vnderstanding thereof. Thus ye see where to this text is to be referred.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, and to lead vs to such a repentance, that we delire only to serue and please him, without seeking after any thing of our owne. And because we are so given to the things of this worlde, pray we him the sooner to drawe vs hence, and in the meane while, to giue vs his grace to offer our life to his will, and to conforme it to his iustice. And for the doing hereof, pray we him, that his worde may beare such rule ouer vs, that we be governed by it, and conforme our whole life thereto, vntill that being despoiled of all our carnall affections, wee be clothed with his heauenlie glorie, when we shal haue neede, neither of scripture, nor of preaching. That it will please him to graunt this grace, not onelie to vs, but vnto all people and nations of the earth, &c.

The

The 14. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

23 And when ye heard the voyce out of the middest of the darknesse, because the mountaine did burne, ye came too mee all the chiefe of your tribes and your elders.

24 And ye saide, Beholde the Lorde our God hath shewed vs his glorie and his greatnesse, and wee haue heard his voice out of the middest of the fire, we haue seene this day that God hath talked with man, and he remaineth liuing.

25 And now why should we die? &c.

WE thinke if God in steade of preaching his worde by the meane and ministerie of men, should in his owne maiestie speake, or that some Angel sent from him should appeare vnto vs, that wee should be more liuely touched than wee are, and that the whole worlde incontinently would be conuerted, that euerie one would yeld obedience without any either contradiction or rebellion. But alas, we knowe not what is conuenient and profitable for vs. For if wee considered of our owne frailtie and weakenesse, wee would soone vnderstand that it is not possible for God to touche vs with his maiestie and power, but hee must needes altogether ouerwhelme and confounde vs. Therefore, when men desire that God would manifestlie shew himself with some visible signe, or that hee would descend from the heauens to teache them, they knowe not what ones themselues are, neither consider they how weake and fraile their condition is. For if they would well consider and bethinke themselues hereof, the infinite glorie of GOD would strike them with a wonderfull feare and trembling, knowing full well, that they are not able to beare it. Therefore let vs knowe that GOD prouideth our profite and saluation, when hee declareth vnto vs his will by the mouth of men, when hee ordeineth and appointeth minis-

sters of his worde, to bee messengers vnto vs of such thinges as hee knoweth to be meete and conuenient for vs. And yet so is it, that for once he would by euident proofe holde men conuicted, that it were not good and profitable for them to heare his voice thunder from heauen. And that is the cause why he woulde publish his lawe, not simplie by Moses, but descending in his owne person, as wee haue alreadie handled. And yesterday we saide, that the lightninges, the whirlewinde, and the flaming fire, and all that we reade of in the 19. and 20. of Exodus, that all this (I say) was done, to the ende the people of Israel should learne to beare greater reuerence vnto the worde of God.

Now this instruction apperteineth also vnto vs. For God would that the memorie of these thinges should last for euer, and that the vse of them should bee perpetuall. So then, beholde GOD hath once displaied and laid open his glorious maiestie, to the ende wee might learne to receiue his worde in all feare and humilitie. But withall he would also that the people of themselues shoulde bee constrained to say, It is not good that God speake vnto vs againe, onelie let vs haue a man to bring vs suche doctrine as it shall please him to sende vs. And this rule is for to condemne vs, if wee follow not the example of this people, which hastilie put forth themselues to speake in this sorte. Nowe if any one alledge, that this whiche was then spoken cannot binde vs, he is easilie thus answered: That if at this day God would doe the like he did then, that is, would pronounce with his owne mouth that which we now heare by the mouth of mortall men, it should bee impossible for vs to abide his glorie: and not to be altogether ouerwhelmed therewith, and vtterlie confounded. And so let vs learne, that this is here recited vnto vs, to the ende that, in the person of the people of Israel, wee knowe that God applieth him selfe to our slendernesse and infirmitie, when it pleaseth him to sende vs his worde to bee preached by men like vnto our selues, which might bee his messengers, respecting herein what is behouefull and profitable for vs. And knowe we, that this is an inordinate and foolish desire, to wishe that God would appeare vnto vs from heauen, or shew vs some apparant and visible miracle. For we cannot comprehend his maiestie and glorie. And although it bee the proper nature of the lawe to fraie vs, yet apperteineth this as well vnto the Gospell. For wee must take this as a generall rule,

that

that as sone as we feele the presence of God, wee must needes bee confounded. Wee see howe the Angels hide their eyes, because the glorie of God is greater than they can beare, and they are constrained to confesse, that they are ouerweake to beholde it as beeing creatures. What shall then be saide of vs? For wee are farre inferiour vnto the Angels. And there is beside in vs an other thing, which maketh our infirmitie the greater: namelie, that wee retaine not that integritie and innocencie of our first nature, wee are not such as God created vs, that is to say, earthly men only as was our father Adam: but we are altogether corrupted, and there is nothing in vs but sinne and wickednesse. And therefore it must néeds bée, that God be made our enimie, and that we fly from his throne, as malefactors will keepe themselues as farre as they can from the iudgemẽt seate of their Iudge: briefly, wee are poore miserable wormes & stinking carions. So then, as sone as God shall approche and come néere vnto vs, wée must néedes be frighted with so great a feare, as to be beaten therewith downe to the ground. Therfore it is profitable for vs, that God declare himselfe vnto vs in such sort as hath beene already touched: namelie, by the meane and ministerie of men: that hée ordaine and appoint men to expounde vs his will, as if he himself spake, and that his worde be receiued of vs in such reuerence, as if wee heard him to thunder from the heauens. But it shall bee profitable for vs more fullie to vnderstande that which in a worde we haue heere touched, and elsewhere more largelie handled: namelie, that the law in comparison of the Gospel frighteth and fraieth vs with a wonderful feare. And why is this? Because that in the lawe, God requyreth of men that which is his due.

Now consider wee, whether wée are able to discharge our selues herein. May contrariwise, whether wee bée not as poore and miserable debters, which haue not one farthing to pay. Ye sée then in what a desperate case we are. For how euer the case standeth with vs, god dischargeth vs not, but declareth that we are worthie to bée accursed and condemned of him. And for this cause hauing shewed howe the life of men ought to be ordered, he addeth this curse and malediction as thundring on vs, Cursed are they which obserue & accomplish not all those thinges which are heere contained. As if hée saide. All men must passe heere vnder condemnation, from the greatest to the least, *Deut. 27. 28.*

all muſt knowe they are indebted vnto mée, and that by right I may caſt them bodome to the bottomleſſe pitte of hel. If I pronounce this ſentence, there is not one may bee able to reply againſt mee, for all are vtterly loſt and condemned. Beholde the language and ſpeeche of the lawe, beholde the ſtyle which God vſeth, and nowe muſt not all needes tremble hereat? It is not then without greate cauſe ſaide, That the lawe kylleth vs: and if withall it ſhould pleaſe God ſeuerely to requite of vs that which wee owe him, wee muſt all needes periſh and be confounded. Nowe in the Goſpel there is no ſuch thing: for there GOD beareth with vs, and not onelie pardoneth vs our faultes, but hee writeth alſo his will in our hearts. Moreouer, albeit wee ſerue him but by halfes, yet hee pardoneth vs our default, and (as I may ſay) winketh and cloſeth his eyes when wee are halting in our duetie. And as a father dealeth not ouer ſtreightlie and preciſelie with his childe to oppreſſe him, ſo God in his Goſpell vſeth a fatherlie gentleneſſe toward vs, that we ſhould not feare to come vnto him.

Heb. 12, 18. And this is the cauſe why the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes ſaith, That we are not come to this mount which ſmoketh, that wée are not come to Sinai, to ſée the burning fire which might affraie vs, to ſée the lightenings, and all thoſe other thinges which were to amaze and confound the people: but that we heare a ſweete and pleaſant melodie, by the which we are accompanied of the angels of heauen, with the ſoules of the holy patriarches, and of the fathers, which lined in the hope of eternall life, (although they had yet nothing but obſcure ſhadowes) that God now couplely ioineth vs with them which in old time haue waited for the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Seeing it is ſo, we muſt not drawe backe, but euerie one muſt ſet himſelfe forwarde, to come with a bolde courage to heare our GOD, forasmuch as hée ſpeaketh ſo gentlie and louinglie vnto vs, and vſeth ſo fatherly a ſpeeche, as which ſerueth not to feare and amaze his children, but ſweetelie to entiſe them, and to winne their hearts vnto him. This difference therefore is worthy to bée noted, that in comparíſon of the lawe, the Goſpell may ſéeme ſweete and amiable vnto vs. But for all this, wée muſt returne to this generall principle: namelie, that it is much better that the worde of GOD bée preached vnto vs

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by the mouth of men, then if God him selfe should thunder from heauen. And why? For we are not able to abide euen all thunder, and although we are taken vnto a greater familiarity, and yet here is no danger presented: God only therefore commeth with a confused and imperfect sounde. What should we then, when he should speake vnto vs, and when we should behold his glory? For we cannot looke on the Sunne beames, it is a contemptible creature: how should then shall wee be able to beholde the maiestie of GOD, as it were fully the woorde, and in his perfection? Also therefore it is said, that a mortall creature cannot see God and liue, cannot beholde his glory, and not bee vtterly confounded. Yet graunt that God appeared vnto Moses, and that not in such sorte onely as to other of the Prophetes, as it is said in the booke of Numbers. That he gaue him this speciall priuiledge, to be seene of him face to face, euen plainely as of his friende, that he appeared not vnto him either by a vision or by diuine voice, but after a more speciall manner [illegible] Num. 12. 7. 8.

[illegible] ned to be exempted from the common [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

which hée appointed for ministers of the worde, forasmuche as wée would but perish and be brought to nothing by the appearance of the glorie of GOD, if it should bee manifested vnto vs. And to the ende that none might take any occasion to complaine, as if the worde of GOD were not sufficiently approued, and that men might not doubt whether they ought to holde them selues vnto it or no, in publishing his lawe hée shewed himselfe. And wee haue heere the testimonie of the people, which say: It is the Lorde, hee hath made vs this day to féele his glory and greatnesse, wée haue seene that it is hée which speaketh, hee hath interposed none to bée his spokesman vnto vs: but wee haue heard his voyce with our eares. This then hath béene done for once. Withall let vs take this which is heere recited for a testimonie and witnesse, that Moses spake not of himselfe, that hée hath not forged and deuised of his owne braine, the doctrine wée holde of him: but that he hath been a faithfull stewarde of GOD, who auowed and approued him, and not onely ratified and confirmed by miracles, this whiche Moses taught, but in his owne person declared, that it was hée who was the authour of all this doctrine.

Nowe, forasmuch as by great reason the Gospell should bee as autentik, & al wel authorized as the law, we haue had also a witnes from heauen, that this is no humane doctrine, but that it procedeth from God. And this is that which S. Peter toucheth in his second Canonicall Epistle, saying: That he and his companions heard the voice from heauen, by the which the father declared his sonne to bée the souereigne maister and doctour of his whole Church: Behold my welbeloued sonne, heare him. Therefore, when this voice thundred from heauen, God declared that we ought not to take the Gospel for a doctrine hyed and borne héere beneath: but that we should alwaies haue this maiestie before our eies. 2. *Pet.* 1. 18.

As at this time, if wee will be true disciples of GOD, when wee come vnto the Sermon, wee must call to minde this whiche Moses reciteth, That the lawe was published in suche sorte, that it was God him selfe which spake and pronounced it. And againe, wee must adioyne in the second place, the witnesse wee haue alleadged that this sentence of God resound and ring again in our eares, when he hath pronounced: That our Lord Iesus Christ is he, whom he wil

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haue men to heare. Loe an authentike and sure rule we haue, that the worde of God, albeit it be brought vnto vs by mortall men, shoulde bee of full and perfect authoritie with vs, as it deserueth. And to the end that men should not thinke, that Iesus Christ only ought to be hearde in his owne person, he saieth: He that heareth you, heareth me: and he which refuseth or despiseth you, his refuseth both me, and him which hath sent me. Now the Pope and his sacrilegious adherentes, vsurpe this sentence for to establishe their tyrannie: but it appertaineth as much to them, as to the deuill of hell. And why? For they should first of all bring vs the pure doctrine of our Lord Iesus Christ: seeing the sonne of GOD hath not so resigned his office vnto men, as to despoile himselfe thereof: he will not haue vs gouerned after the appetite and lust of men, but he will alwayes haue that preeminence ouer vs, and that rule and empire, which hath bene committed into his handes. So then, when it is saide, That in hearing of them whom he hath sent, we heare him, it is meant, that if we obey the doctrine of his Gospell, not despising it when it is published vnto vs by men, it is as much as if he spake vnto vs: admonishing vs hereby, that we stay not our selues on the outwarde appearance we beholde with our eyes. And this is that which Saint Paule saith: That albeit we be but fraile vessels yea, broken pottes of no value, yet this inestimable treasure, which is committed vnto vs, is not therefore of lesse price and estimation, neither ought the dignitie & worthinesse of it for this cause be diminished. True it is, that we are not able to procure vnto the worde of God such a reuerence as gladly we would and desire. And why? For there is in vs nothing, nothing I say of our owne, which may make for the aduancing of the glorie of GOD: and yet for al this, we must make proofe of our obedience in this behalfe, that is, that we beare abroade the worde of GOD, with lyke great confidence and boldnesse, as knowing that he hath made vs his Embassadours, to declare his will: and withall let vs be ware we correct all hautinesse and presumption herein. As for those vnto whom we come, let them receiue in all simplicitie the doctrine of the Gospell, and let them not dispute, why and wherefore they are bounde to subiect themselues vnto mortall men. For seeing that men should despise, and set at naught the sonne of GOD: yea,

Luc. 10. 16.

1. Cor. 4. 7.

men: the heauenlie father which hath ordeined him soueraigne doctor, except they heare him whom he hath sent for his messengers, it behoueth vs with all diligence to bee ruled and ordered hereunto. So then let vs learne to stoupe our neckes, to beare the yoke of the seruice of GOD, receiuing the doctrine of the Gospell in all humilitie, although it be preached vnto vs by men. And as I haue alreadie saide, let vs diligentlie consider the ratification it hath, which ought to suffice vs to knowe, that the Gospell hath beene brought from GOD himselfe, seeing it hath beene warranted and ratified from heauen, when GOD with his owne mouth pronounced, that he would that men should heare his sonne. Ye see in effect what wee haue to beare in minde vppon this place. And therefore let vs follow them of whom mention is here made: namelie, that we desire not, that GOD for our pleasure descend from heauen: but when it shall please him otherwise to communicate his worde vnto vs, let vs be therewith thankefullie contented. Now it might seeme at the first sight, that there were in this place some contrarietie. For the people say: Wee haue seene this day how God speaketh vnto men, and yet they liue. And afterward: Wee shall die if God speake vnto vs. For it seemeth, that if wee haue once had experience, that God communeth vs not when he speaketh, that this ought to make vs vtterlie voide and harmles. And where for seeing wee are remaining aliue, albeit wee haue heard the voice of God: when he hath done this for once, why shall he not doe it twice or thrice? And here the people say: Wee haue heard the voice of God, but if he speake againe vnto vs, behold we die, wee are vndone, we perish. It seemeth that they trusted not to the bountie and goodnesse of GOD, and that they were alsoe verie vnthankefull, for not acknowledging and remembring the benefits, which GOD bestowed on them, when he left vnto them their full vigor and strength. But we must note that the people hereby declareth, that they will not tempte GOD any further, that it sufficeth them once to haue knowen that the lawe was not a thing forged and feigned by men, but that GOD was the onely authour thereof. This sentence therefore ought thus to be taken, as if they had saide: Wee haue this day seene that GOD speaketh vnto men, and they yet continue aliue: this is sufficient for vs, wee must take heede, lest wee abuse not the patience of God. He hath spared vs this day, but wee must not

herevpon conclude, that he will alwayes doe so: he hath tryed vs in this sorte for one time, euen because of our malice, our stubbornes, and hardnesse of heart. For were we worthie vnto whome he should in this wise appeare in his glory? But hee knewe that we would not bee sufficientlie daunted and tamed to bee ordered to his obedience, except hee should come vnto vs in his visible glorie, and should amaze vs with such feare as to confounde vs. So then, if he should not haue wonne vs by such force, hee knewe wel wee would haue still continued as wilde and sauage beastes. But seeing it hath pleased him of his goodnesse to pardon vs the fault and offence wee haue committed, and that at this day hee beareth mercifullie with vs, let vs not returne to tempt his patience any more. For this should bee too great an outrage, this should bee to mocke his gentlenesse, and to make a scorne of his patience. So then this testimonie sufficeth vs, both for our life, and for the life of our children: & for euer vnto all posterities, euen to the end of the world. Wherefore let them which shall come after vs knowe, that they must not enter into this fonde and foolishe desire, to wishe to haue God vnto them out of the heauens, as if it were conuenient he should bee our fellowe mate and companion. Bee see then how these two places agree very well together. Now here wee haue to note, that albeit the worde of God bee of that force and power, as to destroy and bring vs to nothing, that he yet vseth such mercy towardes vs, that it is vnto vs to life, in steede of consuming and destroying vs. And when I say that the worde of God is of such force as to consume vs to nothing, I vnderstande not only the woorde as it is here described by Moses, but if the Lord would make vs feele the vertue and power of his worde, albeit it should be preached vnto vs by men, yet should it serue vtterly to confound vs. But now wee see that the Lorde quickeneth vs, when hee speaketh vnto vs, and especially at this day, when the Gospell is preached vnto vs: for this which is spoken by Saint Iohn, is euerie day accomplished: namelie, That all those which heare the woorde of the sonne of man, are restored to life. *Iohn. 5. 25.* For by nature we are aliantes from GOD, we are exiled and banished his kingdome, wee are dead, and as it were entumbed in some graue or sepulchre: and loe, our Lorde Iesus Christ proffereth vnto vs the remission and forgiuenesse of our sinnes: God his father adopteth vs for his children. Beholde then the

manifestation of saluation which is opened vnto vs, and we are thereby quickened and restored vnto life by the meanes of the Gospell. And for this wee haue wonderfull greate cause to praise and glorifie our GOD, for that hée maketh his worde to serue for to restore vs vnto life, and to deliuer vs from death, whereas his woorde is of such force and vertue, as vtterly to consume vs, if he of his mercie did not turne it to woorke a cleane contrarie effect in vs.

Nowe withall let vs diligentlie note, that if our Lorde hath once bestowed on vs more than we any way deserue, wée must not therfore take leaue and licence héere by to tempt him, and to desire alwayes to rule him after our owne lustes and appetites. As we sée at this day the Papists will excuse themselues for not receiuing the Gospell, because they sée no miracles done in our time. Yea, but let them answere me whereunto the miracles which our Lorde Iesus Christ hath done, and which he committed to his Apostles, serued? Ought these to serue nothing to our profite and commoditie? Behold then what admirable vertue and power GOD hath declared at the beginning of the gospel. The heauen and the earth were then moued, there was no parte in the worlde wherein GOD imprinted not some woorke or signe of his maiestie, that the gospell might bee authorized. Beholde the Angels, which descended at the birth of our Lorde Iesus Christ, to beare witnesse vnto him: beholde the Sunne which was darkened at his death: behold the vaile of the temple which was rent in two pieces, to shew that the holy Sanctuarie was opened, and that freer and bolder accesse was graunted vnto GOD than euer before. The raging and tempestuous Sea is appeased, the Diuels themselues doe homage to the glorie of GOD being present.

Briefly, both by signes and wonders aboue and beneath, god hath declared that the gospell proceeded from him, as wee haue alreadie shewed. So many maladies & sicknesses healed, so great warres appeased, so many other signes and wonders which were shewed, were not to serue for one time onely, but at this day the memorie of them ought to remaine: and wée must receiue this witnesse for a seale of our faith, that wée doubt not, but that the dignitie of the gospell ought to bée as greate at this day, and that the authoritie

thereof is alwaies notwithstanding confirmed, as it was then, when Christ wrought his miracles. And yet for all this wee see many of the vncredulous and vnbeléeuing sort, which alledge, that if they did see any miracles, they should be conuerted.

But it is certaine, if they were nowe presently shewed, they would still remaine in their obstinacie and stubbornesse, and take thereby an occasion of further enuenoming and inpoysoning themselues against God. What remaineth then for vs to doe? We must learne (as I haue saide) to content our selues with that which God hath once done. If God hath giuen vs more than hee owed vs, let vs receiue it, and with giuing of thanks let vs learne not to prouoke his wrath and anger against vs by an ouer presumptuous tempting of his patience. Behold then what we haue to beare in minde in this place, when the people saith, Let the Lorde speake vnto vs no more, for it sufficeth vs that we haue hearde his voice, and yet haue beene permitted of him to liue.

And that this wee haue aboue declared may bee more certainlie confirmed vnto vs, let vs beare in minde that which is heere saide, What flesh hath hearde the voice of the liuing GOD and liued? For by these wordes in this place it is plainelie shewed, ỹ the people of Israell spake not in their owne name, but euen in the behalfe of all mankinde. They say not onelie, What are all wee to heare GOD speake? but What is all flesh? And in verie deede (as I haue touched in the beginning) it cannot bee, but men are either starke madde, or starke drunken, when they cannot humble themselues: for there needed no other thing for them to doe, but to respect their owne estate and condition, to say, What are wee? There is nothing, neither in our bodies, nor in our soules, but frailtie. We are not nowe remaining in our nature wherein wee were first created: but beeing fallen there from into that estate wee nowe are in, what are wee but as a water which glideth away, as a smoke which passeth and vanisheth on a sodeine? And which worse is, wee are enimies of GOD, and hee must needes bee our aduersarie partie, forasmuch as there is nothing in vs to be founde, but sinne and wickednesse.

Therefore when wee bee entised and tickled with suche foolishe and vaine lustes and desires, as to wishe that GOD would doe

miracles, that wee might heare the Angels of heauen: let vs returne to thinke on this which is heere saide, and what is all flesh? Let vs, I say, enter into this consideration, to bethinke our selues what wee are, and our owne small abilitie shall sufficiently aduise and aduertise vs, to giue praise and thankes vnto God, that he maketh vs not feele his presence to consume and vtterly to confound vs, but with an amiable mildnesse and gentlenesse, alloweth vs to approche, when we heare men like our selues, and our brethren, which speake vnto vs in his person.

And let vs further note, that whē the people of Israell say, What people hath heard the voice of the liuing God, and remained aliue as wee? It is to shewe vnto vs, that God would not that this should bee drawen into consequence, for vs to conclude any thing thereon. And therefore let vs no alledge this, to say? And why speaketh not God at this day vnto vs after a visible manner, as hee hath done to his people in the mount? It pleased him then so to doe, but we must not impose him a lawe, or thinke to binde him to continue to do that which he hath done for one time onelie. So as I haue saide, let vs not abuse the graces of God as dispitefully to question against him in this sorte. And seeing God hath done this at other times, why will he not doe the like at this day? When men lift themselues vp in this manner against God, behold, what a diuelish presumption and ouerweening is in them. Let vs therefore giue God so far as to graunt him this libertie, to manifest himself vnto vs in such sorte as it shall please him, & as he shall knowe it profitable & necessarie for vs. Let vs not binde him by constraint to any necessitie: for that it shall haue pleased him for one time to vse some especiall grace, let vs not desire him to do the same againe, but content we our selues simplie with his will, whereunto we must alwaies be subiect. In the end, it is said, Go thou neere vnto God, & heare all which he shall say vnto thee, & declare thou it vnto vs, & we will heare it & doe it. We see here in the first place how the people desire that Moses should be ỹ messenger, to bring thē whatsoeuer he shal haue receiued frō God. And this is written for our instruction, that euerie one submit himselfe to the pollicie & rule of order which God hath established in his Church. For (as I haue already said) he will speake vnto vs by the mouth of men, that is ỹ onelie purpose why he would there should be

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ministers. This order is not inuented by men, but our Lord Iesus Christ hath declared, that he would haue such a regiment in his church. Ye see then an inuiolable order, and which proceedeth from God, who will haue Pastours in his Church to annoūce and declare his doctrine which we must receiue to our saluation. Seeing it is so, let none appose himselfe against it, but let vs patiently beare it, that God calls for them among vs, by whom he will haue vs to bring vnto vs the embassage of saluation. And let vs not murmure at this, that euery one of vs hath not such a priuiledge: for his will that his bodie, that is, his Church, be so gouerned. Ye see then what we haue to gather vpon this place, namelie, that sithence God hath appointed such store of his seruants, we are therein quietlie and gentlelie taught, that there is no vsurping or vsurpation of this, if all be not Doctors and teachers, and that God hath not euerie one vnto this office: for they will be obedient according to his good pleasure, as we haue alreadie said.

Behold one note to be obserued. But withall, let vs also note, vnder what condition we must haue the receiuing place. For this place is to discerne betweene seruants and teachers, which falslie abuse the name of GOD, and attribute vnto themselues the rule of Prelates without rime or reason, & betweene the true Prophets and good seruants of God, and ministers of the Gospell. The Pope and all his pestilent vermine will say, that men must heare them and receiue their doctrine, without any contradiction. And why? For God would there should be Prelates in the Church, and will that men heare and obey them. All this is true. But in the meane while, is this title giuen indifferentlie to all, and without discretion? No. But God hath withal ordained that he will be chiefe, that we be subiect vnto him, and not in the seruitude of men. Seeing then it is so, we must know what Prelates and what Doctors God sendeth vs, as we are directed by this place, namelie, such as speake what God shall say vnto them, and then deliuer it faithfullie to the people. So they which would be heard in the name of GOD, and that men receiue their doctrine in all reuerence, let them be the first to heare God, let them not attempt to adde any thing vnto the word of God: but let them be tractable, and easie to be taught of God: and when they shal haue bene instructed by God, let them dispense vnto others that which they haue receiued from God. For none are to be accoun-

sed gouernaunce of the worde of God, but suche as haue full libertie to speake, and which maie perchaunce haue a mailt erishippe ouer others, to bring vnto them whatsoeuer shall seeme good to themselues? And we must not beere be too wise: for God reserueth vnto him selfe this office, to declare that vnto vs, which he will haue vs to knowe. It is not here simplie saide, Heare that which God shall say vnto thee, and then come and tell it vnto vs: but it is saide, All that which God shall say to thee: so that there is no point nor article which may be omitted, in this sort, that Moses is here put beside all libertie of presuming to declare any thing, but that which God appointeth and commandeth him to declare. And now, what are these filthes of the world, which will dare aduaunce themselues aboue Moses? We shall in the ende see that there neuer rose any Prophet called with so singular a grace as was Moses. And in deede, albeit there be an admirable spirite in Esaie, and in all the rest of the Prophetes: yet is Moses notwithstanding preferred before them all, when it is saide: Remember the lawe of Moses my seruant, which was giuen him in Horeb. And beholde Malachie, which speaketh after all the rest of the Prophetes, doth referre all vnto Moses, as if he were the principall Doctor and Teacher, as if the lawe were the fountaine whereof all must haue.

Now then since it is so, that Moses, who hath in this sort bene preferred, to whom God gaue so excellent a dignitie: if he (all this notwithstanding) must not enterpose to declare any thing of his owne, but what he hath heard of God, that must he faithfullie dispense vnto the people: is it not a deuilish arrogancie of lewde villaines to presume to say, that it is in them to impose and make lawes for the consciences of men, and to binde them vnder the paine of mortal and deadlie sinne? Is not this too barbarous a tyrannie? So then, let vs hold this meane, that we fall not into two vicious & wicked extremes: namelie, that seeing God would gouerne his church by the exteriour preaching of his worde, let euerie one rule and order himselfe thereto, let vs be diligent to heare sermons, and let this policie and rule of order be inuiolablie kept as a thing sacred and hallowed: namelie, to be taught by the mouth of mortal men. And in the meane time notwithstanding let not men haue this authoritie, to bring vnto vs what them liketh, but let them be faithfull stewards and dispensers of the worde of God. And that we may alwayes protest, that our faith is

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grounded on the will of God, let vs not depende on the wisedome of men, but let our Lord so hold vs vnder his obedience, that we may say, It is he whome we heare from heauen, albeit he vse the ministerie and labour of men, as a meane to doe this.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him that he will make vs to feele them more & more, to the end, that we may learne to displease our selues. And because the soueraigne & welbeloued to deliuer vs from all our maladies and corruptions in vse, that wee heare his holy doctrine, pray vnto that it will please him to open vs our eares, that we may learne to receiue it in all feare and humilitie, and that it may be so imprinted in our hearts, that we make it auailable the vse whereunto he hath ordained it, that is, that we be therby [illegible] and brought to saluation, to the end we may with al our heart desire it, and apply our [illegible] more and more. And so let vs say humblie from our heart, Almighty God and heauenlie Fa-

ther, &c.

The

The 15. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

Then I harde the voyce of your wordes, when yee
spake vnto me: And the Lorde said vnto me, I haue hearde
the voyce of the wordes of this people which they haue
spoken vnto thee: they haue well saide all that they haue spo-
ken. Oh that there were such an hearte in them to feare mee,
and to keepe all my commaundementes alwaye, that it
might goe well with them, and with their children for e-
uermore.

30 Goe say vnto them, Returne you into your tentes.

31 But stand thou here with mee, and I will tell thee all the com-
maundementes, and the ordinances, and the lawes which
thou shalt teach them, that they may doe them in the lande,
which I giue them to possesse it.

32 Take heede therefore, that ye do as the Lorde your God com-
maundeth you, you shall not decline neither to the right hand,
nor to the left.

33 But you shall walke in all the wayes which the Lorde your God
hath commaunded you, that ye may liue, and that it may goe
well with you, and that your dayes may bee prolonged in the
earth which you shall possesse.

Followyng on that which was yesterday declared, God in this place sheweth, that hee agreeth vnto the request and desire of the people, and giueth them choice of that, which shall serue best to their profite and commoditie. And herein we see, that he would breede a sense and feeling of his goodnesse in this people, to the ende that hee might the

the better winne them vnto himselfe. It is true, that for the right of his rule and authoritie he hath ouer vs, wee ought to be vnder his subiection, and to yelde him obedience, and he might force vs heereunto: but hee chooseth rather to handle vs in all fatherlie loue and gentlenesse. Loe then why he sheweth, that hee is agreed with the request of the people. And so let vs diligently note, that GOD considereth of that, which is so good and profitable for vs, that if wee were to make our choice, we could not wishe any thing better, than that which he hath appointed. It shall not alwayes seeme so vnto vs, but the thing notwithstanding euidently declareth it. Moreouer, hee addeth that hee hath not done according to the desire of the people, but because he did approue and allowe their request. For wel it may be that God sometimes will giue vnto men that which they require: but this is because of their importunitie, and in the meane time it turnes them to their condēnation. As when the people would needes eate flesh, it is very true. they were satisfied therewith, but they payed their shot full deare: for God was angrie, that they desired to enioy a thing, which was taken from them. And albeit God then satisfied them which had murmured, so that they had wherwith to fill their bellie, yet had it bin much better they had al died for hunger. Now in this request wherof Moses in this place speaketh, there is no such thing: for God expressly saieth, That they haue rightly iudged. As if he did say: Follow this order, for ye shal see what a pleasure & good turne I do you. Ye haue requested of me a man which should speake vnto you in my name, & I am contented you haue him. This therfore ought ỹ rather to perswade you to receiue the doctrine, which shalbe preached vnto you in my name: forasmuch as I haue graunted this at your own choice & desire. And yet think you not that I would haue pleased you herein, without great reason, and for good purpose. For I assure you, you shal do well to follow this order of profiting in my word. And alwayes, & as often as Moses shal come to you, when I shal haue sent him, heare ye with al reuerence that which hee shall tell you for your profite & cōmodity. And so let vs note, that whē the word of god shalbe preached vnto vs by me, that this is not done according to their pleasure & fantasie, but because that God hath heere deliuered a doctrine, which is profitable for vs. And this ought the rather to stay vs from being moued with any fonde affects & [illegible] to change as fleeteth vs, what we vnaduisedly shall imagine.

Num. 11. 33.

wales nouelties debite & pleasse to [illegible] to see them wherein we are to stay & rest our selues: namely, that all the rules of our life we heare the word of God, which shalbe preached vnto vs by men. And why? Because not only the will of God is [illegible], but he hath also declared that the thing is good & behoueful for vs. Moreouer, God in this place as maketh the people better to conſider of obseruing the commandements of the lawe than they had done. For the people had ſaid, All to will do them. And God ſaith on his ſide, that he will giue them the will to do them, that he will bréede in their heart ſuch a deſire. Now by theſe words he giueth vs to vnderſtand, that it was a vaine thing for them, and it coſt them little to make a promiſe, as men will with ful mouth make great proteſtations, but when the time commeth to fulfil the things they haue ſpoken, they ſhewe full well how at random and inaduiſedly their promiſes haue bene made. God therefore to make the people féele howe harde a matter it was to obserue the lawe, ſaieth in this place, I would feigne it might be ſo. For the worde he vſeth, when he ſaieth, he will giue them the will and power, importeth in Hebrewe, this, which we ſay, Oh to be it: and, I could wiſhe it well. It is true, that GOD here ſpeaketh much after the maner of men, vſing a verie homaine ſpeche. For he needeth not to wiſhe any thing, all thinges are in his hande. And therefore one might replie vnto him: And this is in thee, O Lorde, to doe: what? thou who will giue them an heart and will? Who hath power to doe this? For man of himſelfe will neuer be inclined vnto that which is good: but he muſt be framed thereunto, and this can not be by any creature, but by the holie ſpirite. So then ſeke no further, who ſhall giue them the power to obserue thy commaundements, but the holie ſpirite, who worketh the vertue and power of the ſpirite, and then they ſhall [illegible] as we ſhall hereafter ſe that God ſaieth, I will giue you the will and power to feare me. If this were in vs, what ſhould he néede to ſay thus? But he pronounceth that it is in him to doe this, As he ſpeaketh by his Prophete, I will giue them an heart to obey me. We ſhall ſe as much ſaide to this purpoſe hereafter, I will cauſe that they ſhall keepe my commaundements. God therefore challengeth this office vnto him ſelfe of inſtructing men, and of gouerning them by his holie ſpirite, to the ende they may be ſubiect vnto him, and that they [illegible] themſelues to his wilkes. And wherefore then in this place

Deu. 30. 6.

Ier. 32. 39.
Ezec. 11. 19
& 36. 27.

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formerly hes to withe this: It is for that (as in manie other places) he speaketh after the manner and fashion of men. And this is to the end, that wee may better understande, as I haue alreadie touched, that when men speake vnto vs of walking in the obedience of God, that this is not done without great difficultie, and that all our senses may bee more throughly awakened, to applie our selues willingly and painefully vnto suche a studie. Therefore in steade of this, that men lightly promise without anie long deliberation, that they will worke, I knowe not what miracles, that they will obey GOD, that they will obserue the lawe, let vs knowe, that wee must examine what power and strength is in vs, and then shall we perceiue howe weake wee are, wee shall see that we are so farre from being able to performe all that which is commaunded vs, that wee knowe not where to beginne: nay, we knowe not howe to conceiue one good thought, vntill GOD hath reformed vs, and drawen vs into him selfe, that hee giueth vs the will, and bestoweth withall on vs the power to put in execution and practise that which we shall haue willed. We see then what this worde importeth, And who shall giue them the will? Dooe I wouthe it might bee so. By this let vs bee admonished, not to presume on our owne power and strength, to bee ouer hardie and venturous in matters concerning God.

For this is the cause of our ruine and destruction, when we think our selues able to doe all thinges whatsoeuer: and GOD by good right laugheth to scorne in the meane time suche arrogancie and ouerweening of men. But learne wee to feele our owne weakenesse, howe we are able to doe nothing. And albeit that we are bounde to accomplishe whatsoeuer God commaundeth vs, that this is not to say, that wee therefore haue the meane to doe it: but contrarie wise wee want all power and abilitie to performe it. For it is not so small and easie a matter to loue God with all our heartes, to loue GOD with all our mindes, with all our power, and strength, and might, that we haue but to say: Yea, wee will goe roundly awaie hereto: but let vs knowe that this surmounteth and exceedeth all the ability which is in men.

Nowe, when wee knowe that the lawe conteineth a iustice quite aboue vs to attaine vnto, and that on our parte wee are so weake and feeble, that it is pitie to beholde, then shall wee

learne to lament and bewaile our selues before God, and vnderstanding full well, that we are bound to do whatsoeuer he commandeth, we shall desire that he wil giue vs the power, that he will aide vs by his holie spirite, and that not onelie hee will support vs in our frailtie and weaknesse, but that he wil begunne and perfect that which is in vs, that he will giue vs a will and desire, and confirme and continue the same in vs, and that afterward, when hee shall haue giuen vs a constancie to perstil in our desire, he wil giue vs also the power to accomplish all that which we shall haue well desired. Now withall GOD in this place sheweth, that when hee sendeth vs his worde, it is for this ende, to ioyne and knitte him selfe with vs, that wee also may be vnited vnto him: so that hee demaundeth nothing but obedience, that when wee shall become children vnto him, hee may shewe him selfe our louing father. Beholde then for what intent God will that his worde bee preached vnto vs: namely, that wee may be gathered vnder his winges, that he may protect and defende vs, that he may saue vs: yea, vnder this condition, that we come vnto him quietly, and that we suffer our selues to be gouerned by his worde, and to be subiect thereunto. True it is (as we haue alreadie touched) that this is not in our power, that God must bestow on vs the grace hereto, and that he giueth not this grace vnto all. But we are not here to inquire after the secrete counsell of God, what the cause is, that he reformeth and reneweth some by his holie spirite, and that he leaueth others to wander according to the corruption and wickednesse of their owne nature, and neuer draweth them backe into the right way. Wee must not entangle our selues in this Labyrinth: but let it suffice vs to knowe, that God would shewe that men are inexcusable, when hee saieth: O, I could wishe it might bee so: as if hee saide, That after that wee haue beene taught in his worde, wee haue no excuse, GOD shall not bee in fault, if wee be not saued. And why? For if wee walke as hee commaundeth vs, wee shall perceiue that this is the way to come to all blessednesse. And so let vs impute vnto our selues the cause of all thois euils which shall happen vnto vs. And when wee shall bee afflicted, when GOD shall chastise and punishe vs by aduersitie and sundrie other afflictions, let vs knowe wee haue no cause to murmure or to complaine against him. For our selues are in great fault, because wee haue not followed his worde.

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We see in effect, what we haue to beare in minde vppon this place. True it is, that we must in the meane time haue recourse vnto his ayde and helpe, knowing that we are ouer weake on our part to accomplish the laiwe, and that we can not fulfil our duetie therein: nay, not come neare vnto it in what sort soeuer. But yet, if we walke not as it behoueth vs, we must alwayes passe vnder condemnation, knowing that al the fault lieth in our selues, and that when we are beaten and chastised with the roddes of God, that we can not say that this is beside al merite and desert of ours. And why? When we haue the woord of God, we haue a testimonie and witnesse that he desireth to be vnited and ioyned vnto vs, and to execute the office of a father towardes vs, and to preserue vs in all prosperitie: were it not that we on our part did burie his grace, and hinder the course and proceeding thereof. Loe then howe men are by good right conuicted, to haue repelled, and despitefullie refused the gratious goodnesse of God, and to haue debarred him of all accesse and entrance, by shutting vp the doore, when they haue beene taught and instructed by his woord, and yet they haue not profited therein. And so this is a verie profitable admonition for vs, when we see that God willeth in this place, that we would do that which he commaundeth vs, to the end it might be wel with vs. And hereby we see, that if we receiue his doctrine in all reuerence and humilitie, if we seeke to yelde all obedience thereunto, it can not be, but the ende and issue thereof shalbe prosperous and blessed, and that we shalbe certeine of our saluation. Howbeit, it is true, that we must alwayes returne backe to this point, to pray God to giue vs the minde and will to serue him: but if thorough infirmitie we faile in our duetie, let vs learne to condemne our selues, that we may be absolued before him. And moreouer, let vs reioyce when we see that he procureth by all meanes our saluation, and seeketh to set vs forward therin alwayes, and as often as his holie woord is preached vnto vs: and let vs call to minde that which is saide in the Prouerbes of Salomon, That the solace and delight of the wisedome of God, is to dwell with men. Behold, howe God here protesteth, that when he sendeth his woord, it is to instruct vs in all perfection of wisedome, as if he sent his wisedome from the heauens. Yea, and to what end? For wisedome is brought in here to speake, and to say: Behold my dainties and delites to dwell with the children of men. And this is as much as if God did display and laiue

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open his heart vnto vs, and that he saith: Behold, I will binde my selfe with an holie and sacred bond vnto men, when I instruct them by my word, and if they on their part be not wilde and vntrotie, they shall perceiue, that I will alwayes be in the middest of them, and neuer withdraw my selfe from them. This ought well to inflame vs with such a reuerence of the worde of GOD, that we endeuour with all our might, to profite therein, and not to suffer our selues to be at anie time turned from it, seeing the benefite thereof is inestimable: namelie, that by it our Lorde vniteth him selfe with vs. Nowe, it followeth in the text of Moses, howe God commaundeth the people, That euerie one goe his way into his tent, and that Moses abideth ouer and heareth, I will tell thee all the commaundements, and the statutes, and the lawes, which thou must teach the whole people. God againe in this place sheweth, that he ceaseth not to continue his teaching and instructing the people, albeit hee vse the meane which hath bene declared: namelie, that Moses bee as an expositour of the will of God, and the messenger thereof vnto the people. This is well worthie the noting. For it serueth vnto this end, that we may vnderstand, that God will alwayes hold vs vnto himselfe, and that he will not that our faith bee grounded vpon men, or dependent on them. And it is verie needfull and requisite, that we be warned hereof. For it is true, that those which followe their good meanings, or (which is) that they hold and sticke vnto those things, which haue bene determined by the Church, and by the auncient Fathers, may bee for a time so blotted, that if one tell them, they hold as it were by the aire, that they haue no certeine stay and assurance to leane vnto, when they forsake themselues wholie one men, they will be still headie and obstinate: as we se the Papists, whom the deuill hath so bewitched, that they are content to stand vnto the resolutions, which men at their owne lust and pleasure haue made, and venturouslie despised the worde of GOD: yea, albeit men bring manifest witnesses and testimonies from it, to reproue their superstitions, all is one with them, they are so dull and obstinate, that it killeth not with them: whether GOD be contrarie vnto them or no. Yea I say shall haue this presumptuous boldnesse for a time, to venture to goe on whither their fond imagination carieth them, they shall indurate and harden them selues against GOD: But when they come to the triall, that GOD throughlie

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them with the vertue and power of his woꝛd, behold they are so astonished and amazed, that they know not what may become of them. So then let vs note, that we shall haue no certaine and assured stay to rest vpon, except our faith be grounded on the woꝛd of God: & that we may protest, that whatsoeuer we haue, we holde from him, & account that this is the only trueth, that wee wander not in our owne imaginings and thinkinges, oꝛ propose vnto our selues the doctrine of men to leane vnto, and to stay and to rest vpon. When we heare that God in this place saith, I wil tell the the things wherein thou shalt instruct them: let vs note, that we must also in like manner leane wholy vpon him, that our faith muste not be wauering and in doubt, being vnderpropped by the infallible veritie of his woꝛd. And this is that we are to seeke after when we come vnto a sermon, that we may haue this article fullie ratified, and sealed vp in our consciences, that we haue the woꝛde of God, wherein our life consisteth.

Withall let vs also note, that GOD woulde bridle them in this place, which haue the charge of preaching his woꝛde, from all presumption of commending vnto the people any thing of their owne: but that they content themselues to be faythfull dispensers of that which hee commaundeth, that they alwayes protest they haue serued GOD, forasmuch as they haue executed that whiche he gaue them in commaundement, and haue deliuered the doctrine they preache, from the mouth of God, into the handes of men. Behold what wee haue to note, we (I say) whome God hath ordained ministers to declare his woꝛde, and vnto whom he hath committed this office of teaching his people, that we adde vnto his woꝛde no thing of our owne, which we shall haue inuented: but that we declare simplie, and purely that onely whiche we haue to protende from God. Howbeit, to the end that the people should not thinke, that God instructed them by halues, but in most absolute and perfect maner, he repeated in this place that whereof we haue heeretofore entreated. The ordinances, the statutes, the commaundements, ceremonies, as if he saide, that nothing shalbe inuenting in his doctrine, and that the people ought not to desire any thing beside whatsoeuer. This hath beene before largelie expounded: but alwayes, when GOD vseth so many and diuerse woꝛdes, where he might vse one in a woꝛde haue saide the same, let vs note, that the better to withholde men from attempting vppon

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anie foolish curiositie to adde anie thing vnto his lawe, as we se hath by nature we are ouermuch giuen thereto, and our fleshly minds alwayes stirre vs vp, to inuent I know not what nouelties and newfangled things. And loe howe in Popery euerie one hath enterprised to thrust vnto the word of God his patch and piece, and how manie lawes they haue made one on the backe of another. And whye? For it seemeth vnto them, that it sufficeth not to walke vprightly according vnto the word of God, but that it were further good and conuenient that their deuotie should be made therein. Nowe, God contrarie wise saith. That if we haue his law, we shal haue his statutes, commaundements, ordinances, and rites: as if he said, That mortall men must not be so presumptuous and ouerweening, as to desire to seeme wiser than he. For when they shall haue made their longest discourses, they shall not finde any thing which they can amende, or where vnto they may make addition: yea, let them know, that al that they shall seeke to put vnto of their owne, shall not bee superfluous onelie and vnprofitable, but shall marre all: as if one would mingle vinegre with wine. And nowe God, hauing spoken in this sort, warneth them further, that they beware they obserue that which he shall commaunde them, without anie turning, either vnto the right hand or vnto the left. In these words our Lord declareth, that hee wil not that his law be honoured of men, in approuing it onely with the mouth, as if we would seeme to be acquited of all the dutie we beare thereto, when we doe no more than this: but he sheweth, that for to retaine vs vnder his subiection, and in his seruice, he hath published his lawe, and at this day will haue it preached. For herein it is his pleasure to proue, whether he shall dispatch and come to anie agreement with vs, as with a quiet and tractable people, whome hee hath nowe lured to his traine. Let vs therefore diligentlie note, that when we come vnto a sermon, this is not to say, that the doctrine we heare, is holie and good: God shalbee much beholding vnto vs, when wee haue pronounced that his word is worthie to bee receiued. He will not that we be his iudges. I graunt that we owe vnto him this confession, that when we shal haue heard his worde, euery one acknowledge, that it is the pure & sincere veritie, that there is no other righteousnesse, nor iustice, nor wisedome, besides that which is there contained: but in the meane time we must proceede further: namely, to offer our selues vnto the seruice and honor of God. Behold, our profitable

table point which we haue to gather vpon this place. Againe, wee are diligently to obserue that which he saith, Take heede ye doe that I command. For hereby God sheweth that we must seriously applie all our might and power herein: for men shall not followe God by sleeping. Seeing that when they vse the greatest force they may with them selues, they shall with much adoe drawe their legges after them, their infirmitie and weakenesse of nature is so great. Let vs not thinke then to acquite our dutie towardes God, without bestowing much paine and labour therein: for the thing is of great difficultie, considering what ones we are: namelie, slouthfull and ouer lazie to bestirre our selues about that which is good. May, I say yet further, that albeit God hath affectioned & moued vs with some desire thereto, albeit he gouerneth vs with his holie spirite, the thing will not be euer euen. For if he leaueth vs to remaine such as we are, we shall not onelie be slowe herein, but we shall drawe cleane backward from that which he willeth vs: if he call vs vnto him selfe, we shall retire and flee backe from him: yea, we shalbe forced to followe that which is euill, so farre shall we be from being able to desire any manner of way, that which is good. But note we that which we haue alreadie touched, that although God hath giuen vs some good affection, albeit he hath set vs in some good way, yet are we still slouthfull, and loth to remoue one foote: whereas a minute of time ought to serue, we had neede of an houre, we winch & fling in such sort when we are put forward: and if happilie we moue one steppe, either we stumble, or else we start backe two paces forwarde, or we take so grieuous falles as it is pitie to beholde. So, it is not without good cause, that God saieth here, Take heede ye do that I commaund you: as if he saide, True it is, that my lawe is giuen you that you should put it in practise, and to yeelde obedience thereunto, but thinke ye not, that this is so easie to be done. Therefore, let euerie one prepare himselfe with such diligence to walke after my commaundements, that ye thinke and meditate on them, that ye be diligent to bestowe all paine in them, that ye take a full taste and sauour of them, that ye bee vigilant to stande on your waiteth, for feare that you bee not turned aside: be ye therefore attentiue and heedefull herein. Thus wee see briefly, that our Lorde exhorteth vs in this place seriously to trauell and bestirre our selues, when question is of walking vnder his obedience. And why? For the things he requireth of vs, are not so easily performed.

And moreouer, wee are so euill disposed, as is lamentable to beholde, that except wee bee pricked on, and driuen thereto, as by force, wee can not set one foote forwarde as wee ought in our dutie. It is needefull therefore, that wee awaken our selues better, to bee more diligent and attentiue, and to stand alwayes more warilie on our gard, to accomplish that which our Lorde commaundeth vs. Nowe he afterwarde addeth, That this must be done without turning either to the right hande or to the left, but that altogether they walke in that way, which he hath shewed them. True it is, that this place shalbe expounded more at large in the twelfth Chap. of this booke: but yet wee must not so passe it ouer in this place, but that wee vnderstand what God meant to say in forbidding vs, That wee bee not turned, neither vnto the right hãd nor to the left. For he sheweth vs, that his pleasure and wil is in all things to be hearkened vnto of vs, nothing whatsoeuer excepted. Now this importeth two thinges: that is, we neither adde vnto, nor diminish any thing from his lawe. To adde any thing is, as if wee woulde turne on the right hande. For they which adde vnto the lawe of God, doe it as thinking that it is not enough to obserue all that which is therein conteined, but that it were good to put somewhat more thereunto. Loe howe men would haue some place for their fantasies, that if they can bethinke themselues of any thing, it seemeth them that God hath forgotten it, and that it were good to bee obserued. And beholde what hath bene the cause of making so many ordinances, so many lawes, ceremonies, in Poperie. The Iewes had the like vice reigning among them as it is vpbraided them, that by their traditions they had set at naught the statutes and commandements of God. So then let vs beware howe wee walke rightlie, I meane on the right hande, to turne our selues from the way which God hath shewed vs. And why? We turne then on the right hand, when we will bee too wise, and too iust, and when wee thinke it is good to doe more than wee are commanded. But herein wee are the seruantes and ministers of the deuil, for GOD disalloweth whatsoeuer wee shall adde vnto his worde, he will no such medlie. Now wee decline vnto the left hand, when wee diminishe and take away any thing from the worde of God, namelie, when wee thinke wee haue done enough, if wee haue discharged halfe our dutie, and that for the rest he giueth vs leaue to follow

Mat. 15.3.

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our owne lustes and desires. A man that shal not bee subiect to some number of vices, will happilie delite to acquite himselfe towarde God so far forth: but because he cannot restraine himselfe from some one, he would that God should notwithstanding be contented, & giue him leaue to condition with him, to say: Wel, if I mille in this thing, I wil make a recompense in another. But take we heede of walking on the left hand, that is to say, of diminishing anie thing from the word of God: for when he hath forbidden men murder, he hath forbidden them also to steale, & to commit adulterie. Wee must therefore without any replie yeelde our obedience vnto him in all things. For as we ought not to adde any thing vnto the lawe of God, so is it not lawful to take anie thing from it: but we must walke in all the way he sheweth vs. And nowe, when hee saieth, The way, it is to exhort vs to hold our selues therein, as wee shal see in the end of the booke. Behold the way, walke ye therein, will Moses say: as if he said, who soeuer turneth himselfe aside from the doctrine which I set before you, he wandereth, he runneth but acrosse the fields, & the further hee runneth on, the further he is from the end of his iournie. So in this place. Walke ye in the way, that is to say: Wander ye not wilfullie ye wretched ones, straie not from the way wherin your God leadeth you, ye can not misse of your way by following of him: but if you giue your selues ouer to go whither your own head leadeth you, god must in the end declare vnto you, that you shalbe but as straying & wãdering beastes, for that you haue not kept forwarde your course in the right way. And so know ye, that the word of God is your way wherin you must walke. If this word were wel imprinted in our minds, we should be held shorter, than to runne wandring at rouers, & ranging whither soeuer our flitting fansies & desires shall carrie vs, as we accustomablie vse to do: we should (I say) be holde backe in this way which is prescribed vs: for our God sheweth vs continually which is the way. And yet for all this men enter into their disputes, and make long questions: what is to bee done? and what is not to bee done? As if it had not beene saide, That GOD neuer openeth his mouth, but to shewe vs the right and perfect waye: and when hee sheweth it vs, doe not we him great wrong and iniurie if we followe him not? And doe we not accuse him, as if hee had lost all his time and paine hee beestoweth to instruct vs? Wee

Deu. 28. 9

se no we what this worde (way) importeth: namelie, that without the woorde of GOD, there is nothing but errour and deceite, and that men farre abuse them selues, when they shall thinke to doe wel, except they leaue themselues to be gouerned by the woorde of God, which sheweth vs the best and the streightest way. And purposely he saith, All the way: For hee will not parte stakes with men in this place, as they desire hee should, that is, they would alwayes reserue some thing, I know not what, vnto themselues: they woulde serue GOD by peece meale (as wee say:) but beholde. GOD on the contrarie side saith, I must be obayed of all, throughout all points, or else I renounce you, I will none of you. So then, will wee approue our life vnto GOD: Wee must not thinke to yeelde him obedience in part onelie, but wee must take heede we order our whole life vnto that which he commandeth vs, in suth sorte, that wee may truelie protest and say, That wee haue holde our selues in al the way of the Lorde.

But here one might make a question, whether it be possible, that we may walke altogether in the way of God: For contrariwise, seeing it is so, that men doe not the good they desire to doe, it shalbe much when we shall haue endeuoured to come to the right way, and to goe as far forward towards the end as we may, though we come not thereto. Saint Paule himselfe complaineth, that he could not do that, which he had desired for to discharge his duetie towardes God. *Rom. 9. 17.* But here is no speaking of such perfection as is required in the law: but we must onlie vnderstand, that God will haue men employ themselues with all diligence in his seruice, and that they inforce themselues thereto, that they make their race therein, albeit they can not attaine the end thereof. Therefore, although for all our life time wee go as drailing our legges after vs, and that wee come not fully and perfectlie vnto God, yet must we proceede hereunto, and goe on forward, not in part onlie, but in all that which is contained in the law. It is true, that we cannot acquite our selues herein, in such sort, that there be a full and correspondent agreement betweene the woorde of God, and our life: but when wee shall haue this desire to order our selues vnto God, and to conforme our selues vnto his will, not in one point or article onelie, but in all without exception: and when wee shall haue beestowed our whole trauell and endeuour herein, beholde, howe wee shall holde vs in all the waye of GOD.

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For he beareth with vs in such sort, that he accepteth in good part such a desire, when he seeth vs to go roundly to worke in his seruice, & that we double not with him, & that we reserue not to our selues our own lustes and desires, nor yeld vs the liberty and leaue to fulfil them, but that we labour to please and to serue him as much as we may, and according vnto the grace which is giuen vs. Now withall he also adioyneth, That they may prosper, and that it may be well both with them, and with their children. Wherein he giueth vs to vnderstand, that (as we haue alreadie touched) all the miseries and afflictions which wee endure in this worlde, are so manie chastisements and corrections for our sinnes. And we cannot say that we are any other way miserable and vnhappy, but by our owne fault. True it is, euery one desireth to be at his ease, and in prosperitie, yea needes not to be taught to wishe this vnto our selues, for our nature leadeth vs hereunto: but for all this, it seemeth that we haue conspired our owne miserie & wretchednesse. For the meane to prosper is this, that we be obedient vnto God, and then he shall blesse vs, in such sort, that we shall feele the fruites thereof in all things. But whate're we will not yeld him the obedience which is due vnto him, and therefore we must needes be depriued of his blessing, yea must needes reiect and refuse vs, as if we were not worthie to be in the number of his creatures. And so let vs note, that God bringeth in this place reproue men, & shewes them that they are themselues the cause of all the miserie and wretchednesse they suffer in this worlde, and that they must attribute it to their sinne and wickednesse. But yet would nature withall allure vs vnto idlenesse, when she setteth before them a reward: as if he said: Go to, there is great cause why I should be serued of you, I deserue it full well at your handes, though you haue small regard of mee: for seeing that you are my creatures, is it not good reason that you be my subiects, and render all obedience vnto me? Ought you not for the whole time of your life to be giuen bound vnto me? But yet I will not required you to serue me for gratuitie: I will so deale in mine owne right in this behalfe, so that whereas ye are bound to doe all that I commande you, without looking or hoping for any thing: loe, yet I tell you, that I am at hande, to bestow you, & to make you prosper, when you shall serue me. When our Lord speaketh thus, he therewith that he will be most louing and amiable vnto himselfe, that he will (as it were) beseech

their heart, that they might be the better affectionated, & more willingly obedient to serue and please him: seeing that hee commeth not vnto them, with such rigor and seueritie as he might: but yeelding of the right which appertaineth vnto him, chooseth rather to execute the office of a Father, saying, That if we will bee his children, he will bee a liberall and bountifull Father towardes vs: and albeit hee oweth vs nothing of duetie, yet hee will bestowe a reward on vs for the seruice which wee shall haue owne him. Nowe hereby wee are admonished that it pleaseth God, by so great gentlenesse and liberalitie, to allure and winne vs to himselfe. But wee must not hereupon inferre, that men may merite and deserue any thing by seruing of God. As the Papistes, when they heare suche places, they runne to their merites: and it seemeth vnto them that GOD is further bounde and beholding vnto them than he hath promised. But God contrariwise meaneth to shew vs that he is readie to applie himselfe to vs, and to the fashion of men, that he desireth nothing els but to win vs by all gentlenesse vnto his obedience. And this is not for any profite that he receiueth thereby: as in very deede, what profite shall he receiue when we shall haue accomplished his whole lawe? Is this any way to his gaine and aduantage? No. But it maketh for our saluation. Yee see then what the intent and purpose of God is, & what we haue to note vpō this sentēce. So let vs learne that when wee shall haue obeied our God, if hee make vs to prosper, that this is not for that hee oweth vs any thing, and that wee haue deserued it, and that we may vaunt that hee giueth vs no more than we deserue: but it pleaseth him to display and lay open his bountifull goodnesse towardes vs, euen to call that a reward and recompense, which he of his meere and free liberalitie giueth vs, without being therefore bounde and indebted vnto vs. Moreouer, when hee chastiseth vs, and that wee are subiect to so manie miseries, let vs knowe, that wee doe but gather in the fruites of our owne seede. Because wee haue ledde an euill life, our Lorde must needes shewe some signe and token of his anger, that it may bee knowne hee is Iudge of the worlde. But hee hath also as well a regarde vnto our profite: that is, that wee might be sory for our faultes, and bee in displeasure with our selues for them, and that wee should haue our recourse vnto him, in true and vnfeigned repentance. Loe howe GOD, when hee sheweth his anger towardes vs, ceaseth

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not to declare his loue: for he seeketh to winne vs vnto him selfe. He seeth that we are brought asleepe in our sinnes, and he awaketh vs, knowing that it is expedient and necessarie that he should so doe. Thus we see what we haue to note vpon this place. Now in the ende, Moses speaketh of the lande they were to possesse, and saieth, That thou maiest prosper in the lande whiche I shall giue thee. And againe for the second time, he placeth this sentence, That it may be well with you in the lande which you shall possesse. Now it seemeth at the first sight, that God promiseth no other rewarde than in this earthly and transitorie life. If it were so, the hope of the people of Israel had bene cleane beaten downe. But let vs note, that our Lorde hath vsed towardes this people an other meane than with vs: albeit it tendeth to the same ende. For the sacrifices which were ordeined in the lawe, were not to withdrawe the people from the saluation which wee haue in Iesus Christ: but they serued rather that GOD might signifie that men are condemned, that they haue no other meane to be reconciled vnto him, than this which they haue by our Lorde Iesus Christ. Notwithstanding for all this, men ceased not to kill brute beastes for their offerings, and GOD saide: Your sinnes shall be pardoned, when you shall haue killed for mée a calfe, a lambe, or a sheepe. It seemed them that God would appoint the remission of sinnes by these sacrifices of brute beastes: but he did not. This was to conduct the people, after suche a grosse manner, to the redemption which in the end was obteined vs in the person of our Lorde Iesus Christ. As much was signified by the land of Chanaan: God therein would from the beginning propose the eternal inheritance of saluation vnto the children of Abraham, in saying to Abraham, I am thy exceeding great rewarde. He promiseth not the lande to Abraham, therein to rest him selfe: but he will that Abraham put his whole trust and affiaunce in him, that he raise and lift vp his hope aboue al the worlde, that he waite for euerlasting life for him selfe, and for his whole race. But it was expedient, because our Lorde Iesus Christ was not yet appeared, because the vaile of the Temple was not yet broken: it was (I say) expedient and néedefull, that this lande of Chanaan should bée as it were a pledge thereof, because this was fullie promised him for his inheritaunce. Let vs therefore diligentlie note, when it is sayde, That thou mayest prosper in the

Heb. 9. 8. 13. 14. 22.

Leuit. 16. 15. 16.

Gen. 15. 1.

lande,

1. Tim. 4. 8

Heb. 9. 8.

Lam. 1. 6.

The

The 16. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 6.

These are the commaundementes, ordinaunces, and lawes, which the Lord your God hath commaunded me to teach you, that ye might doe them in the lande whither ye goe to possesse it.

That thou mightest feare the Lorde thy God, by keeping all his ordinaunces and commandements which I commaund to thee, al the dayes of thy life, thou, thy sonne, and thy sonnes sonne, that thy dayes may be prolonged.

WE haue often heretofore sene, how Moses did put the people in minde of the things contained in the lawe: euen yesterday we sawe how to the same purpose he made mention of them, and yet agayne in this place he doeth the like. Notwithstanding, this is no needelesse or vnprofitable repetition, seeing that men haue so soone forgotten the things they learnde in the schole of GOD, except the memorie of them, for their better remembrance, be often refreshed. And yet se there neuerthelesse nothing to turne us aside from our duetie herein, for we are so muche inclined vnto vanitie, that there is nothing more harder than to retayne vs vnder the obedience of God. As soone as we haue conceyued a fantasie, it carrieth vs away headlong, & we remember no more what God hath said vnto vs. Moreouer, because he seeketh no other thing than to win vs vnto himself, he must roote out of vs those false opinions wherewith we are already possessed. For it is with vs as with a ground which hath lien fallow a long time, wherein a man must bestow exceeding great labour, before he can apply it to some profitable vse. And that is the cause why Moses saith agayne, That these are the commandements, and ordinaunces, and lawes, which the Lord hath committed vnto him, that he should set them vnto the people, and that they be obserued.

Now by these wordes he signifieth, that God will reteyne the people in his obedience: when he seemeth to say, What meane yée, yée wretched ones to wander? Loe, I deliuer vnto you my law: when you shal hold your selues in this doctrine, you cannot erre: this is the way of saluation, therefore keepe your selues in it. Now for all this, men are ful wandring: they are borne away headlong hither & thither, & God continueth to rayne them with his bridle: as when an headstrong horse is hardly ruled, the rider restrayneth him backe with bit & bridle, not for one time onely, but so long as he continueth wild & vntamed. Yée see then how God vseth the same order with his people. And hereby he sheweth that ý mind of man is ful of rebellion, or full of lightnesse and rashnes, & that he cannot wholly rest himself on ý word of God, wherin notwithstanding our whole saluation & happines consisteth. Seeing then it is so, let vs note, ý vnder the person of ý people of Israel, we are here warned, that whē God hath set before vs his word, we must not think on it for one day onely, but ý we ought to exercise our selues therein all the time of our life. And when wee heare this, Behold the statutes, Behold the ordinances, Behold the commaundementes, which I propose vnto you, we must remember, that it is not for vs to establishe lawes and rules to governe our life by, but that this authoritie appertaineth onely vnto God. Moreouer he hath also admonished vs, that he hath shewed vs the right way. Let vs therefore followe it, and walke therein, let vs not make further inquiry what we ought to doe: for there remayneth no doubting when our Lord hath once spoken: we must no longer alleadge, I know not whether this bee good. I and we not whether somewhat else bee too bee added. Content we our selues with that which GOD hath shewed vs: for he shall alwayes be a good maister to teache vs, if so be we be not peruerse, and euill scholers to learne vnder him. And for this cause here is againe mention made of commaundementes, statutes, and ordinances, that we might not thinke that God would deceaue vs by halfes. There is then in his law compriſed a full perfection of all wisedome: so that there resteth nothing, but that we geeue obedience thereunto, that we be not so curious, as to desire more than God sheweth vs, that we haue no foolish deuotions, which leade vs wandring hither and thither: knowing that God hath not enuied them which were vnder his charge the knowledge of anie thing behoueful for them, but hath taught them all that which was

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profitable and necessarie for them. Let vs therefore governe our selues according vnto his will, let vs apply all our senses thereto. Let his lawe suffice and content vs, albeit the whole worlde frame & reiect vs, the matter shall not much skill, wee haue our Iudge. And so, although the worlde wander after vaine fantasies, although euery one forge vnto himselfe, that which seemeth him best, let vs alwayes consider of appearing before the tribunall seate of our God, and that vnto him we must render our account. Now hee hath deliuered vs his lawe, and by that he will iudge vs. And therefore let vs leaue al that the worlde imagineth, & know that all is but vanitie & lying. Whereas all Moses addeth that concerning his office hee hath deliuered nothing of his owne. And this Protestation is well worthy to bee noted. For wee must remember what hath been before saide, that Moses was the most excellent Prophet that euer God raised, & yet notwithstanding he taketh to himselfe in this place no suche libertie, as to teach any thing according to his owne iudgement. For he knewe well that he himselfe was a mortall man, subiect to the lawe, as were others. Behold why he protesteth that that which he bringeth, is that which he hath receiued from God, and that he dispenseth and deliuereth it as it were from hand to hande. Whence Moses doeth this, who will dare to say, that it is lawfull for him to adde further? And yet we see what is happened herein. For among the whole rabble of Papists, is there any so geuen to heare what God shall say, as to preferre his worde before the doctrine of men? Nay: but they haue their holy mother the Church, as they terme it, they haue their determinations, their decrees, their statutes: and they thinke it sufficient to haue this couerture of the Church, and in the meane time they robbe God of his authoritie, to cloth men which are but rotterneste therewith. Behold an intollerable sacrilege, when GOD shall no longer be a Lawgeuer to conduct his people, and to holde them vnder his yoke, but that men will vsurpe and challenge to themselues such an authoritie. So muche the more heedefully ought wee to obserue that which is here contayned: namely, that Moses albeit he was as an Angell of heauen, although God had exalted him aboue all men, though he had bin in the mount fourtie daies without eating or drinking any thing, to shewe that he was no longer of the number of others: yet notwithstanding, when he came from this heauenly glory, and as it were from the company of Angels, he humbleth him-

him selfe, and declareth that he commeneth vnto the people nothing of his owne, that he will not feede them with fables and dreames of his owne head, but that he is contented to haue heard what GOD hath pronounced, and that he reciteth it as a faithfull seruant, which addeth nothing thereto, which falsifieth not the commaundement which is geuen vnto him. Nowe for the thirde, we haue againe to beare in mind vppon this place, That followeth vnder the exhortation which he addeth, that is, That the people discharge themselues in keeping of the lawe. As if he said, That it is not geuen for men only to confesse, that all that it conteineth is good, iust, and of great equity: but to this end also, that euery man shew himself obedient vnto GOD, &c. And that is the cause why he saith, That thou feare the Lord thy GOD, and that thou keepe his commaundements and statutes. Vnder this worde of feare, he signifieth that God, by declaring his lawe, meant to make vp proofe whether we will serue him, or no. For albeit we obserue all the commaundements through fayre shewe, that may cousen no man with vs: yet if this feare of GOD be not rooted in our hearts, if we beare him not this reuerence, to desire to be his, all the time of our life, this outward obseruing of his commaundements, shall be but a friuolous shewe, and a pompe of great vanity. For we must not thinke that God is contented with that which outwardly appeareth (for any thing is he highly prised and esteemed of men) yet is it but as a vapour of smoke before him. [illegible] Wherefore we ought therefore to beginne at this point, if wee will obserue the lawe of God truely, and in such sort, as our life may be agreeable vnto God himselfe, that we beare him all reuerence, that we studie to be ruled by his hande, vnder his guyde and direction: that we seeke to doe him homage as our Soueraigne King, that we seeke to deuote our selues vnto him, as to our Creatour, that we seeke to honour him as our Father. When this affection and desire shall be in vs, then haue we the beginning of the whole lawe, and of all righteousnesse: and that is the cause why Salomon saith, That the true wisedome is the feare of God. And when we will know whether wee haue profited in the lawe of GOD, wee must sound our hearts to make the triall hereof, to feele if wee haue such a zeale and desire, that GOD may bee honoured and glorified of vs. For if there bee such a feare in the heart, the fruites thereof will appeare, both in our handes, and in our feete, and in all the partes and members of our bodie,

Prou. 1. 7.

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as God hath also ordeined this rule before he put them into hand. See that they which boast themselues of the feare of GOD, whose whole life is loosed to all wickednesse, their owne tongues tell them they lie, and they shew full well, how impudent and past shame they are, when they vaunt so much of the feare of God. Wherefore there is a place, which is well worthy to be obserued: wherin Moses first declareth, that to serue God aright, it behoueth that our hearts be wholly geuen ouer vnto him, that it sufficeth not, that in outward appearance wee haue all the vertues that a man might imagine, except such an affection, and inward desire of the heart go before. Againe, that the feare of GOD is no hidden and idle thing, although it rise in the heart of men, yet must it appeare and shewe it selfe in their liues: for it is the heart, which gouerneth both the handes, and the feete, and all the other partes, and members of the body. Wee must therefore learne to shewe by effect and experience that we feare GOD, by ordering our whole life according vnto his will. Now let vs see what they can gather that God alloweth of things which are attempted beside his worde: as the Papistes are continually zealous and religious (as they say) in the seruice of God; but in the meane time, what doe they? They trauell much, & are euer busie about the outward things, because in the whole seruice of GOD, which they pretende, there is nothing, but the inuentions and deuises of men. For the Gods of the Gentiles, a rable of cruell tyrantes, are not much before their puppets and idols, to trudge from Altar to Altar, to chaunt their Psalles, to gad on pilgrimage, to fast such a day at the hands of such a Saint, to obserue Lent, Embring-tides, Saterdayes before Pentecost, & nothing else, but a Dungeon of such like trumperies. Whatsoeuer they haue deuised vnder the shadowe and title of the seruice of God, shall one finde that God euer founded one word or syllable hereof? No, all this hath been deuised by men. Let vs also consider by this place, whether God accepteth such a seruice as good meaning full in my contrariwise he saith, That we shall feare the Lord thy God, & that thou obserue all his commandements. But when men forge them selues a side from such a way, and follow their owne fantasies, and what soeuer shall haue been forged by men, they stifnecked declare, that there is no feare of GOD in them. For after this sort they vsed to offer vnto him sacrifice which he abhorred, as they pretended, namely, the tenth. As Saul is also reproued for the selfe same

1. Sam. 15. 23.

vnto the xxxiiij. Chapter. That if men hearken not vnto the voyce of God, to subiect themselues thereto, but contrariwise follow that which shall haue beene inuented in their owne braine, or forged and deuised by men, it is as idolatrie: yea, as the sinne of Witchcraft, which is detestable in the sight of God. Behold, how the holie Ghost speaketh hereof, although mortall men are of a cleane contrary iudgement. Now therefore we se how Moses hath here declared, that when we shall diligently and in deede feare God, we will vse him this honour, to be gouerned according vnto his will, wee will not graunt men this leaue too leade and conduct vs whether it seemeth them good: but when God shall speake, wee will knowe that euery mouth must be stopped, & that our eares must bee opened to heare & to receiue whatsoeuer he shall lay vnto vs. But yet it sufficeth not y euery one for his owne part onely imploy himselfe to serue and honor God, but we must procure and endeuour as muche as in vs lyeth, that he be adored and honoured of the whole worlde: yea, we must labour that his seruice may endure and continue after our death, & the name of God liue not and die with vs, when we shalbe taken out of the worlde: but that it remayne and abide vnto all posteritie. And loe what is the cause why Moses saith, Their children & those which shall issue from their race, shall continue to serue God, and to obserue his lawe. Let vs therefore diligently note, that Moses in this place not onelie exhorteth euery one for his owne time to serue and obey GOD, by conforming his life vnto the lawe which hee hath deliuered, but he willeth that Fathers bestowe all their paynes to instruct their children, that we may leaue such a seede after vs, if it bee possible as that God be worshipped of our posterity, that his name be alwayes purely and sincerely called vpon, & that by this meane, they which shalbe left ended from our loynes, may be blessed, and that the couenant of God wherein our saluation is conteyned, endure for euer, and neuer perish, albeit we are mortall & of small continuance. Yet we are so farre from discharging our dueties in this doctrine, that we may see fathers geue suche examples vnto their children, that it seemeth they haue conspired to abolish and to take cleane away the feare of God, and the whole obseruation of his lawe. This ought not therefore to marueill, if God withdraw himselfe from vs, and that it seemeth that he will not accept all the benefites and blef-

blessinges which he had bestowed on vs. For are we worthye that he should continue them, seyng we are so retchlesse and negligent to procure that his seruice and worshipp may continue in his entire and perfect estate? And yet this should moue vs to so good a purpose (as I haue said) that it be not spoken in vayne. Let vs therefore labour with all our might, to teach those which shall come after vs, in such sorte, that the worshippe of GOD, and his seruice may continue for euer, and that men alwayes knowe and acknowledge him for the Father and Sauiour of all the worlde, and geue themselues wholy and wholly vnto him. Wherfore Moses both admonished that whereof he had before spoken, that this is, To the ende that their liues may be prolonged, and that GOD may make the people to prosper, according to the promise which he made vnto their fathers that he would geue them a land flowing with milke & honye. We haue alreadye expounded what Moses hath vnderstanded by this worde: namely, that God, albeit by one worde he moueth vs to serue him, notwithstanding vseth towardes vs most mylde and amiable meanes to winne vs to himselfe, when he promiseth vs a reward, when he shall haue serued him: not that any woorkes deserue any thing, or that he is any thing at all bound vnto vs. But when he gratifieth vs so, and in such wise bewrayeth towardes vs, it is to this end, that we may be so much the more lively touched, & that we may serue him with a more ardent zeale & desire. For shall wee not be euer wicked and vnthankfull, when we heare that God of his owne good will bindeth himselfe vnto vs, and that he will propose vnto vs a reward and recompense? Shall wee not I say be euer wicked and vnthankfull, if we apply not our selues wholly vnto his seruice? All we are his, and whatsoeuer we are able to doe, we owe vnto him: as our Lorde Iesus Christ speaketh plainely heere of. Who are you? saye they. I demaund of you, when a man shall haue a seruaunt or a slaue, whom he shall burden and presse as an Oxe, or an horse, whether if this slaue haue done him any seruice, he will rise from the table to serue him, when he returneth from his worke? No: for all that which the bondslaue doeth, he oweth of dewty to his maister and superiour. So you owe all vnto God (saieth Iesus Christ) & he oweth you nothing. But yet God of his owne free good will bindeth himselfe to promise vs, if we serue him, we shalbe well recompensed, and perceiue our labour & payne shall not be lost. Luke. 17. 7.

And

which is in the lawe required. Wherefore al muſt confeſſe that they are accurſed. Yea, in this ſo ſmall portion, and ſo little as may be, wherein men acquite themſelues, ſhall bee alwayes founde ſome wickednelle, and ſome blottes or other. So then, God ſhal iuſtly reiect & haue in deteſtation al that we bring, and are able to doe. Let men therfore be ouerwhelmed & confounded with ſhame, & let thē confeſſe that they are al culpable & guiltie before God. Wherfore let us note, that this promiſe cannot be accompliſhed, but that God beareth with vs, & reſpecteth not ſo many vices & infirmities as are in vs, but by his mercie hideth and burieth them. Therfore our workes are thē receiued and approued by God, when he reſpecteth not what they are, but accepteth them, through the vertue of the death & paſſion of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, as good & holy. And albeit there be alwayes many blots & ſtaines in vs: yea, much ſtinking corruption, except it ſhoulde be waſhed away by the blood of Ieſus Chriſt: yet he alwayes accepteth vs by the meanes thereof, and no otherwiſe. So, let vs learne to boaſt our ſelues, and glorifie in the mere and only mercy of God, and not vaunt vs of any merites. And in the meane time let vs not ceaſe to be incited and ſtirred vp with ſo much greater zeale to ſerue him, when we ſee that hee will allure and winne vs vnto himſelf by ſuch mildnelle and gentlenelle. Yea Moſes ſheweth, that whatſoeuer God promiſeth vnto his people, whē they ſhall obſerue his laid, proceedeth frō this fountaine, rather than from any obligation. And this is that which he ſaith, As God hath promiſed to thy Fathers: as if he ſaide, Beloued, ſerue God, and he ſhal bee a good maiſter vnto you. And thinke not that you haue loſt your time & labour when you ſhall haue obſerued his lawe: for you ſhall haue a large reward, which is made readie for you. But withall conſider yee whence it proceedeth: Beholde the fountaine (ſaith hee:) that is, that before yee were borne and brought into this worlde, God hath promiſed your Fathers to bring them into a land which floweth with milke and hony. Moyſes thus leading the people vnto this promiſe which had bene made vnto the Patriarches, ſheweth ſufficiently that God maketh no new promiſe, but that he ratifieth and confirmeth that which he had ſaid. And why? Is it that he was bound to them which were not yet borne? No, but becauſe he had loued their fathers, as he hath aboue ſaid. It is true, that Moſes now ſheweth, that the people was partaker of ſuch a promiſe, if ſo be they ſhoulde obſerue the lawe of God.

But what? We must not alwayes come to this point, that men are vtterly confounded if they will oppose themselues against GOD, alledging anie dignitie or worthinesse of their owne, and that they shall alwayes remaine in their condemnation, they shall finde that they are al accursed. It behoueth therefore that they haue their onely refuge vnto the mercie of GOD: and that they knowe, that when they shall haue forced themselues to walke according vnto his lawe, that God shall owe them nothing, albeit hee wil not leaue to accomplish that which he hath promised them, euen by his meere goodnesse and free mercie. Loe then howe this place ought to bee vnderstoode. Nowe seeing he in this place speaketh of the lande promised vnto the Iewes, let vs note, that at this day we ought to be by many degrees more incited and prouoked to serue GOD, seeing hee hath dedicated the whole earth vnto himselfe, and will that his name bee called on throughout all the worlde. For the blood which our Lorde Iesus Christ hath shedde, hath sanctified all the world, which was then as it were in all filth and pollution. For we knowe there was no lande but this which GOD had reserued vnto himselfe, and wherein hee woulde beare rule vntil the comming of his Sonne. But when our Lorde Iesus Christ appeared, hee then obtained possession of the whole worlde, and his kingdome was extended from one ende vnto an other, and especially nowe, when the Gospell hath beene published. Sithence then it is so, let vs diligently note, that wee are at this day much more streightly bounde vnto the seruice and worship of GOD, for as much as by the precious blood of his Sonne, hee hath consecrated and made holie the whole earth, to the ende wee may dwell and bee lodged therein, and that we may liue vnder his kingdome. And therefore as we wil that he haue vs vnder his safegard and protection, so let vs beware that wee yeelde vp our selues wholie vnto him. But because men are alwayes so fickle and wauering, that (as I haue already saide) no bridles are sufficient to rayne them to obedience, Moyses confirmeth all the doctrine hee hath in this place pronounced, by saying: Marke therefore, O Israel, the Lorde thy GOD is one GOD. He had saide before. Hearken: hee hath saide, Take yee heede: he had saide, That they must obserue the laine. But here he confirmeth his whole matter much more better, when he saieth so expressely, That the GOD of [illegible] GOD. For by

this

this: his meaning is to exclude all the Gods which the worlde forgeth, and he will shewe that it is not lawfull for them to conceiue anie thing after their owne fansie, but that only which we hold by the worde of God. Therfore when the God of Israel is called One God, it is as muche as if Moses did make comparison betweene the God which published his lawe, as before he was manifested vnto his seruant Abraham, and to the other Patriarches, & would oppose him against all the gods which the world imagined. As God in all times hath bene called vpon, this name hath bene common among the Paynims. But what? The Paynims haue so wandered, that albeit euerie one hath saide, I adore and worship God: yet what was this but their owne dreames and fantasies? For when men take vpon them to worshippe God, when they haue no knowledge of him, there is no doubt, but they worshippe idols. The Turkes at this day will say that they worship God, Creator of the heauens and of the earth: but this is but an idol which they worship. And how so? They name him Creator of the heauens and of the earth, they haue no images. It is true. But yet haue they but an idol in stead of God, because they will not receiue our Lorde Iesus Christ who is the liuelie image of God his Father. And we knowe what Saint Iohn saieth, that he which denieth the Sonne, he denieth the Father. Therfore they haue not God, but an idol. As much is to be saide of the Iewes. The Iewes will brag much that they haue the lawe, and that they worship the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Iacob: but what? They are Apostataes, they haue renounced the lawe of God, when they haue reiected and refused Iesus Christ, who is the soule of the lawe. It is he by whom God the father will manifest and open himselfe vnto vs: it is he in whom hee will be worshipped. And againe he saieth, Kisse the Sonne whom I haue sent you. And againe: Who so honoureth not the Sonne, the same honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Let vs therefore diligently note, that Moses would in this place make comparison betweene the GOD which hath declared him selfe in his worde, and all the Gods which are renowmed throughout the whole worlde, shewing that all that is beside him, is nothing but emptinesse, and meere vanitie, and lying. And whye [illegible] God aright, except we haue [illegible] knowne [illegible] her that [illegible]

Hob. 1. 3. 1. Iohn. 2. 23.

Psal. 2. 12 Iohn 5. 23

Ioh.4.22. ye know not what ye worship. When Iesus Christ vseth this word, he doth as it were spit at all those seruices and worshippings which were then established. There was no nation which vaunted not of seruing God: and Iesus Christ reiecteth all that which men thought to be good and holie. Ye knowe not (saith he) what ye worship. Hée sheweth hereby, that it is requisite and needefull there be made some manifest declaration of God: we must not walke here at all aduentures, but we must be assured what the God is whom we serue and worship. Now seeing God must be knowne of vs to be rightly serued and worshipped, let vs consider whence this knowledge shall come and arise. Shall it grow in our owne garden, as we say? Shall we obteine it by our owne labour and industrie? Shall it bée lawfull for euerie one to thinke what shall séeme good vnto him, to say: I haue knowne God? No, no: but GOD must declare and shewe him selfe, hée must approche and come néere vnto vs. And so the onely meane to knowe GOD aright is this, that wée bée taught and instructed in his worde. And loe why he saieth, The Lord thy GOD. For this people had receiued the lawe: and againe, the couenaunt had bene made with their fathers, GOD had separated this flocke from the rest of the whole worlde. It is not then without cause, that Moses here leadeth the people to the knowledge of God, to the end they estraunge and kéepe themselues from all the superstitions of the Painims, that they haue nothing common with the vnfaithful ones: but that they know, that whereas God hath manifested himselfe so familiarly vnto them, they haue a most certein and infallible trueth. Now if this hath bene saide of the time of the lawe, it agreeth much better vnto vs. For albeit God hath giuen a sufficient admonition vnto the Iewes, that they bée not mingled among the pollutions of the Painims in their idolatries: yet haue wée at this day a much more brighter clearenesse, since the appearing of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the liuelie image of GOD his Father, as wée haue saide. And wée may well agrée vnto that which is written in the first of Saint John, None hath séene GOD
Ioh.1.18. at anie time: but the Sonne, which hath alwayes bene in the bosome of the Father, hath reuealed him vnto vs. The auncient Fathers haue had a knowledge (as we haue said:) but this knowledge is accounted as none, in respect of that which we haue at this day by the Gospel. Since the Sunne of righteousnes shineth on vs, beholde God

sheweth

sheweth himselfe most familiar vnto vs. And loe why the Prophet Esay, when he entreateth of the redemption which was to be made in the person of the Sonne of God: Beholde him, beholde him, this is our GOD, this is our Lorde saith hee. The Prophet crieth out, This is, this is our God. Hee is not contented to say in on worde, Beholde our GOD, but he speaketh as if the thing had beene present, and that GOD should then appeare. And how is this said? Was not God in the middest of his people? For hee saide, I will dwell in the middest of you. And againe, Beholde my rest: Sion is the place of my habitation. And againe, hee protesteth, that hee will neuer depart thence, that the people is his temple, that they are his royall Priesthode. Why then is it that the Prophete Esay saith, Behold him, behold him, saith our God: This is he, this is he, when our Lord Jesus should come into the worlde? This is, because God reuealeth himselfe vnto vs in greater perfection. There remaineth therefore lesse excuse for vs, if wee at this day wander, and holde not our selues to the pure trueth, but that euerie one turne after his dreames, to say, It seemeth me so, beholde what I finde to bee good. Know we, that all this is nothing, and that we must returne to that certentie of trueth which hath ben brought vnto vs by our Lorde Jesus Christe. But the worlde is so farre from resolving of this, that it seemeth all haue desired to despite and anger God, that they haue deuised howe to turne their backe vnto him, that they haue laboured to reiect and lay aside al subiection, that they might haue leaue to remaine in their enormities and vnruly demeanours, and that their wickednesse in the meane time might not bee perceiued. The Jewes are vnexcusable, as wée se howe the Prophetes reproche them, that they haue wittingly abandoned and put away GOD, and that they cannot excuse them selues, as the wretched Painims, saying, That they haue heard nothing: for God protesteth, that hee hath not spoken in vaine. But nowe at this day, when God speaketh vnto vs with full mouth, and that wée haue so perfect a reuelation in his Gospell, is not this an ouer great wickednesse, that men yet wander and goe so astray? Were there euer more folish and fonde superstitions, or more outragious and enormous than those which are at this day to bée séene in Poperie? I graunt, the Jewes mingled them selues among the superstitions of the Painims, that they defiled themselues ouermuch with their filthes

Esay. 21. 9.

Exo. 29. 45. Psal. 132. 14.

and pollutions: but when all shall be well sifted and examined, wee shall finde that the Papistes passe surmounted and exceeded them heerein by many degrees. For the worde of God at this day is as it were buried among them. When mention shall be made of faith, the articles shalbe drawne from out of the forge of men, the holy Scripture shalbe of no more force, than as if it were dead, and vtterly brought to ruine. Loe howe they behaue them selues heerein, and when question is of the seruice of GOD, they wander (as we haue alreadie said) after their owne inuentions, and loe, My meaning is good, will they say, and they thinke God will suffer him selfe to bee ruled as a little childe, and that hee will neuer come to examine all the doctrine of Poperie. Againe, if men speake of faith is there any talke of the free promises of God? No, but they attribute all to them selues. When they will speake of the office of Iesus Christe, they ouerthrowe the vertue of his death and passion, as much as in them lyeth. When any question is to be handeled of their saluation, then will they come in with their free will, with their merites, & satisfactions. But we ought contrariwise to returne to the meere and onely grace of the holy Ghost, confessing that we are in bondage and seruitude of sinne, but that we are thence deliuered by the mercy and goodnesse of God. And here hence cōmeth it, that the holy scripture calleth the remission and forgiuenesse of sinnes our righteousnesse. We must therefore come vnto this point, and also know, that if we haue failed in our duetie, wee cannot bring any other payment or satisfaction, than that which we borrowe of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Of all this there is nothing to be found in Poperie: If question bee of calling vppon God, they will make their vagaries vnto their he Saintes and shee Saintes: and Iesus Christ in the meane time shal not be knowen such a one as he is, nor clothed with the office which hath beene giuen him of God his Father. But the Papists degrade him as sacrilegious and false traiterous villaines, which seeke nothing els but to burie altogether, and to set forth to open prey all the glory and dignitie which God his father hath giuen him. As much may be said of all their seruice and religion. Wee see howe the Sacramentes are polluted and defiled among them. In place of the holy Supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ, there is substituted this infernall and diuelish abhomination, of the Masse, wherin they say, That Iesus Christ is sacrificed, as if he him-

Heb. 7. 24.

selfe

selfe had done nothing, as if he were not established the only & perpetual priest by God his father. So then wee see howe the Papistes make a mockerie of the worde of God, wherein he hath reuealed himselfe, that it seemeth, that of set & deliberate purpose they would deface & put out the knowledge of him which is in the Gospel. And therfore we must more heedfully note this worde, That the Lorde is God one, one God only. And so alwayes & as often as this worde of God shal come in place, let vs knowe that it is to cut off all that shall come into our braine, all that which men shall haue forged & deuised, and which we are not taught by the holy scriptures for God forbiddeth such feare considered of vs, that we be not wrapped & entangled in the fantasies & errours of idolaters. And in very deede, we cannot haue the true God, except we haue him alone, that is, that we ioyne with him no cõpanion: for assoone as we come in with our litle halfe Gods, we renounce the liuing God. And why? For he will be alone, as he pronounceth by the Prophet Esaie in another place, I am the euerliuing, saith the Lorde, I will not giue my glorie vnto another. And a- Esay. 42. 8
gain, we haue seene before that he nameth himselfe A iealous God. And for what other cause, thã for this, to withdraw vs from all corruptions. As S. Paul speaketh in the 2. to the Corinth. For assoone as we are turned from the simplicitie of the worde of God, it is as if a woman should hearken vnto a Bawd which shal come to whisper in her eare. So we are forthwith corrupted & so we play the wicked fornicators against God, when we falsifie the faith which we haue promised him in baptisme: we reiect & cast aside his law, we violate and prophane al religion, when we decline the least that may be from his pure & sincere doctrine. Let vs therfore beare in minde alwayes & as ofte as mention is made of this worde (God,) that we know that god must be alone: & therfore when we shal haue accompanied him with creatures he casteth vs off as Apostates, as a people which are not worthy to haue to doe with him, because we would not yelde vnto him the honour which hee deserueth, namely, that he shoulde be the Lorde, but shall haue prophaned his name by making it common vnto creatures, & communicating of it with our dreames. But withall, let vs note, that it is not ynough that we reserue vnto the liuing GOD the title of one worde, but we must take heede that whatsoeuer appertaineth vnto him, remaine and abide vnto him in his entire and perfect estate. As howe? He meaneth not only to be called

Gods.

Psal. 50. 14. 15. 23.

Now let vs call our selues downe before the face of our God, [illegible] with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs [illegible] them better than wee haue done, and that more and more wee may know how farre and wherein wee are bound vnto him, and that we thinke not rashly to acquite our selues towardes him, but that wee tende altogether to him, and to his seruice, that wee haue no other studie nor desire, but to obserue his holie lawe. And seeing we are yet so farre from it, as any thing may bee, seeing wee falter so much and linger in the midde way, hauing the onely refuge to the remission of our sinnes, pray we that it will please him to receiue vs vnto mercy, and to beare with vs so farre, as to continue to conduct and to gouerne vs by his holy spirite, albeit we deserue to bee wholie reiected of him. And withal also pray wee, that it wil please him so to open our eyes, that beholding the brightnes of our Lord Iesus Christ, we may be altogether rauished thereby, and constrained to renounce the things of this worlde, with the lustes, and affections of the flesh, which carrie vs headlong to all wickednesse: in such sorte, that wee haue none other desire, but to humble our selues vnder him, to the ende that being beaten downe in our selues, he may raise vs vp againe to himself, by his word, attending vntil it please him to change and transfigure vs into his owne image and likenesse, in the latter day. That it will please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but vnto all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

35 One of them, a Doctour of the Lawe, asked him a queſtion, tempting him, and ſaying:
36 Maiſter, which is the great commandement of the Lawe?
37 Iesus ſaid to him, Thou ſhalt loue the Lorde thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoule, and with al thy minde.
38 This is the firſt and the great commandement.
39 And the ſecond is like vnto this. Thou ſhalt loue thy neighbor as thy ſelfe.
40 On theſe two commandements hangeth the whole Lawe and the Prophetes.

God bee prayſed.

FINIS.

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